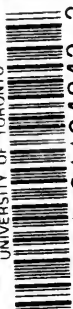


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AGE OF GREAT CITIES:

OR,

MODERN CIVILIZATION VIEWED

IN ITS RELATION TO

INTELLIGENCE, MORALS, AND RELIGION.

BY

ROBERT VAUGHAN, D.D.

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SECOND EDITION.

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JACKSON AND WALFORD,

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PREFACE.

CONSIDERABLE portions of the present volume consist of thoughts which were committed to writing several years since, and with some view to publication. Two smaller works, recently published by the Author,* bear some relation to the general subject of this treatise ; but with the exception of thoughts or passages which recur in some eight or ten of the ensuing pages, the present volume is throughout distinct from its predecessors, its object being of a much wider range, and the topics investigated as relating to that object being of a more general nature. The two preceding treatises, and the present, contain the views which the Author has been desirous of submitting to the public in regard to the Characteristics and Tendencies of Modern Society.

It may be proper, also, to state, that while the Author has endeavoured to think for himself with regard to the whole subject before him, he has not failed to give his best attention to many valuable works relating to it,

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from some of which his own thoughts have probably derived colouring and impression. But it is due to himself to add, that in calling to mind, from this point, the books which he has read, and the opinions which he has expressed, he is not sensible of any obligation to other men requiring from him more acknowledgment than he has made.

The occasion and object of the present publication being the subject of its first chapter, matter which might otherwise have been appropriate in a preface will be found in that part of the work itself.

Notting Hill, Oct. 28, 1842.

PREFACE TO THE SECOND EDITION.

IN preparing a Second Edition of this work for the press, a careful revision has been extended to the whole of it, in the hope of rendering it somewhat less unworthy of the subject to which it relates.

Lancashire Independent College,
Withington, near Manchester,
Aug. 9th, 1843.

p. 151. In the ancient register.

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THE AGE OF GREAT CITIES,

ETC.

CHAPTER I.

ON THE OCCASION & OBJECT OF THE PRESENT WORK.

SECTION I.

ON THE CONFLICT BETWEEN FEUDALISM AND CIVILIZATION
IN MODERN SOCIETY.

OUR age is pre-eminently the age of great cities. Babylon and Thebes, Carthage and Rome, were great cities, but the world has never been so covered with cities as at the present time, and society generally has never been so leavened with the spirit natural to cities. In Europe, this fact has assumed its present magnitude by slow degrees. In the meantime, the old state of things, which the progress of commercial enterprise, and its attendant civilization, have done so much to disturb, has profited by the change, and has become stronger, in some respects, by means of the great social revolution which has seemed to threaten it with extinction. If the baron be not so military as formerly, he is more opulent. If his lands are not often so extended, they are more cultivated and more valuable. If the form of his power has

changed, its positive amount has never been so great as at present. But he is no longer alone as the possessor of power. The power which has changed the form of his own power, and from which he has derived his greater wealth and splendour, has become a rival; and while not unwilling that his social position should be improved by such means, he is by no means willing that any portion of his old pretensions should become subject from this cause to new questionings. He would seize on all the advantages of change, and would evade its disadvantages. The former he challenges as a right, the latter he repudiates as injustice. Greater positive power, is not regarded as a sufficient compensation for subjection to a state of relative weakness. To be more powerful than ever, affords small gratification, if new elements have grown up in society which are more powerful still. Better reign in comparative rudeness, and reign alone, than reign in splendour, and be exposed to rivalry. Hence, while greatly enriched and elevated by the change which is coming fast over all human affairs, the class of persons adverted to are resolutely opposed to some of its most natural tendencies, being much concerned that its influence should prove favourable to the strength of the privileged, and equally concerned that it should not prove favourable to the strength of the people.

In no part of Europe is this struggle between the feudal and the civic, as generally represented by the landlord class and the mercantile class, so pervading, so organized, or so determined, as among ourselves. In no other land is there a commercial power embodying so fully the spirit of the age in this respect; and in no protestant country beside is there an aristocracy or an

established church retaining so much of the form and spirit of remote times. In this respect we are both stronger and weaker than our neighbours. We possess greater force than they in favour of the new, but we are more beset with impediments deriving their strength from affinity with the old. The elements of social life which tend necessarily to collision, are nowhere so powerful, nowhere so nearly balanced; and as the natural consequence of such a relation of parties, we are, perhaps, at this moment, the most contentious people upon earth.

But this deep and ever-active struggle must not be regarded as so much pure evil. On the contrary, it should be viewed, in great part, as the sign of life and health. Where there is no life there will be no movement. Where there is great vigour there will be much doing, and great diversity of judgment, both in regard to what it may be best to do, and as to the best mode of doing it. Men in general concern themselves with public questions, in proportion as they are capable of sympathizing with the moral nature of such questions, and in proportion as the forms of a free government may hold out to them the promise that their efforts on the side of the just and humane will not be without effect. The subjects of a despotism neither move nor mutter, partly because the influence of such governments is opposed to the culture of any public moral feeling, and partly because the subjection of such a people is the subjection of despair. Contradictory as the assertion may seem, the most murmuring nation has commonly been the most moral and the most free. Its loud complaints have resulted naturally from its high standard of

social excellence, and its dissatisfaction with anything short of attaining to such excellence.

The notion of a state in which there are several distinct powers, all adjusted according to a strictly balanced equality, is no doubt a conception which must find its object among the fictions of the imagination, and not in the facts of the living world. On the other hand, a state in which any one power is so far ascendant as to be capable of putting all the rest into abeyance, is a state in which there can be no proper liberty. Checks, however, may be real, and of momentous influence, without being fully equal to the power to which they are opposed, and the conflict between such checks and such powers may be only so much evidence of social vitality.

Such has long been the complexion of our own social history. During several centuries the forms and the spirit which characterize modern society, have been making their way into the place of those which were characteristic of society in the middle age. But every fresh manifestation of strength on the side of the new, has become the occasion of a deeper jealousy, and of a more active hostility, on the side of the parties adhering to the old. The power of the commercial interest has never been so great in the history of this country as at the present moment. But, at the same time, its exigencies have never been so great, its dangers never so imminent, inasmuch as in no preceding time have the pretensions of that interest been regarded by the power opposed to them with so wide or so strong a feeling of distrust and aversion. The danger in respect to the things of the past has thickened, and the fear and resentment of all

the parties concerned to perpetuate such things have increased in the same proportion.

Hence the time has come, in which some men do not scruple to speak of great cities as the great evil of the age. It is not deemed too much to say, that the accident, or revolution, which should diminish everything commercial and civic, so as to place the military and the feudal in its old undisturbed ascendancy, would be a change fraught with good more than with evil. Avowals of this nature have been made deliberately, openly, and in journals of the highest authority. According to some discoveries in social philosophy which have been recently made, every great city should be regarded as an unsightly "wen," and not as a healthy or natural portion of the body politic. Its speedy disappearance, either by dispersion, or by almost any other means, so far from being a matter to be deplored, should be an object of desire. It may be, that our being a people whose land has become in an eminent degree the home of great cities, is the fact which has raised us to our place as the great commercial power of the globe, and which has secured to us our greatness in nearly all other respects, but with persons of the class adverted to, considerations of this nature are no matter for congratulation. The statesman who should signalize his ascendancy by reducing us from this elevation to-morrow, would deserve a place among our greatest benefactors. In the esteem of such persons, the main, and the natural effect of the social relations as they obtain in every greatly-crowded population, is to generate ignorance, vice, and irreligion. Hence, the political change which should serve to restore much of the military arbitrariness which cha-

racterized the secular power in the old feudal times, and which should restore the power of the Christian priesthood in much of the form and greatness which distinguished it during the middle age, would be regarded by such persons as a change which should be hailed with gratitude by every friend of order, virtue, and religion. Principles of this tendency may of course be adopted in various degrees, but in the case of multitudes they are embraced to the extent now stated.

Even religious men, who mean well to their country and to humanity, contribute unconsciously to swell this tone of accusation against our civic population, and against the whole character of the civilization exhibited in our larger towns and cities. Such persons are deeply affected by the scenes of depravity and wretchedness which they explore in such places; and they express themselves in the strong terms, natural to men who know little with regard to the condition of the masses of the people in the great cities of other lands and other times; and in terms, we may add, which are no less natural to men who consider little what the condition of these people would have been, had they been wholly separated from the good influences which go along with such forms of civilization, as well as from those of an opposite description. It must be obvious, also, that there is much need of caution, if persons of this class are to guard strictly against a manner of representation and colouring, which is not so well adapted to convey the whole truth, as to produce a certain kind of effect. We naturally expect that our case will be pleaded with success, in proportion as it can be made to appear as one of deep urgency.

SECTION II.

ON THE INTERESTS AFFECTED BY THE CONFLICT BETWEEN
FEUDALISM AND CIVILIZATION, AND ON THE DESIGN OF
THE PRESENT WORK IN RELATION TO THAT SUBJECT.

WERE the error in relation to the social influence of great cities, to which reference has been made, an error confined in its influence to the science of politics, I should readily have left it to be dealt with in such manner as may have appeared meet to the sagacity of politicians. But it extends—and the men who broach it mean that it should extend—far beyond the circle of mere politics. It bears immediately upon everything belonging to our most important interests as a people. If left to its natural course it would be fatal, not only to all secular freedom, but especially to those purer morals, and to that higher order of intelligence, which the abettors of such opinions expect us to regard as matters taken under their peculiar patronage. Its true tendency must be to bring back the rudeness of a feudal age. Its natural effect must be, not only to place all religious liberty under a rigorous proscription, but to supersede religion itself, by substituting the priestly arts of a debasing superstition in its place. In not a few cases, the men who belong thus to the retrocession class, rather than to the progress class in public affairs, are men who mean all this, and in other cases, what the men do not mean, would be certainly realized by their system, if once permitted to manifest itself by its fruits.

My object in the present work is to expose this class

of errors, and not merely to shew that they should be regarded as errors, but to make it plain that they are errors opposed to whatever is most valuable in our social and religious state as a people. Nor will it be my aim simply to shew, that certain principles are false, and of pernicious tendency; my earnest wish is, to contribute the little that may be within my power toward the building up of truth on this subject in the place of error, such truth as may conduce toward the formation of an enlightened patriotism—a patriotism based upon Christian principles, and intent upon Christian objects.

Nothing is further from my intention than any attempt to conceal, or to extenuate, the evils which exist in our great cities, and which have always had their place in connexion with such forms of civilization. The ignorance, the immorality, and the irreligion which grow up in such associations I shall not only admit, but shall endeavour to make prominent, in the hope of doing something, however trivial, toward calling a wiser, and a more Christian attention, to questions concerning the remedies which may be best provided against such evils. But my claim is, that I may be permitted to look to the good belonging to such a state of society, as well as to its evil; and that I may be allowed to institute a fair comparison between this state of things—imperfect or faulty as it may be—and that other state of things which some men would recal from the past, and substitute in its room.

The present posture of our affairs as a people is one of deep and anxious interest. With regard to the consequences which may flow from it, no man can form any certain conclusion. We have our place as in the midst of a great social and religious struggle, upon which all

sections of the community seem to be more or less intent; and many intelligent minds confess their perplexity and fear when attempting to study the character and the probable issue of a course of things so extended, so complex, and in most respects so difficult. My hope is, that I may be able to afford some assistance to minds of this class. It is not of course to be expected that a publication like the present will enter fully into the many questions which belong to this general subject. But something may be done, even within the limits to which I have restricted myself, toward pointing out the path of inquiry, or furnishing materials for reflection, 'so as to put the mind upon its proper track, and to give to its thinking, in the case of those who need such assistance, a greater degree of intelligence, order, and certainty.

Social history is a species of science, and the story of the world abounds with illustrations relating to that science. It is admitted that these illustrations need to be regarded with discrimination, if they are to be used wisely. An authority eminent in wisdom has said—there is nothing new under the sun. But that saying, considered in its relation to social life, can be true only as regards its great principles or elements. It is not true as regards the influences which are always at work to affect the endless combinations which take place among those elements. In the former respect, the present is always as the past; in the latter, it is never such. But to allege on the ground of this latter fact, that society may not profit by the experience of society, would be the next wise thing to saying that man may not profit by the experience of man, and could leave but one step more to be taken in the same direction, which must be to insist

that man is a being who should not be expected to profit by experience of any sort, not even by his own. Some men may study the lessons of history to little good purpose. But on a subject of so much moment the errors of the foolish should serve as a stimulus to the better conduct of the wise. If the wrong uses which are made of history are very prevalent, and sometimes extravagant, the more should we be concerned to shew that it has its right uses.

It is a part, moreover, of our obligation as Christians, that we should endeavour to realize a distinct perception of our duties as citizens. This must be obvious in the fact, that our duties toward the secular in society, and our duties toward the religious, are often so intimately blended, that it is not found possible wholly to separate them from each other. No intelligent Christian can be insensible to the importance of questions that relate to the manner in which he may best serve his country, and at the same time serve the cause of true religion. Sound knowledge on questions of this nature must be with such minds an object of devout solicitude, and to awaken or direct such solicitude is my purpose in the ensuing chapters.

CHAPTER II.

ON THE SOCIAL CHARACTERISTICS OF GREAT CITIES IN ANCIENT AND MODERN TIMES.

SECTION I.

ON THE GREAT CITIES OF ANCIENT ASIA.

GREAT cities, in all ages, and in all lands, have been centres of vast experiments in the history of society. In this view they all furnish instruction—instruction common to them all, and instruction more or less peculiar to each. Some of the older cities of the ancient world were erected with a view to one object—safety. In others, the founders looked to convenience for traffic, as well as to security. In the former case, the city commonly stood out on the slope of some mountain side, or was seen stretched along the summit of some lofty rock. In the latter case, the gathering place was on the bank of the river, or near the bay of the sea; and in such localities much more both of art and labour were required to provide the necessary means of protection, in the shape of massy walls and strong military towers. With the increase of wealth among these infant communities, came the increase of numbers and of skill, and in proportion to such increase would be the available force placed at the disposal of the men possessing the chief authority.

It will be remembered, that the capitals of the great empires of Egypt and Asia had their place on the course marked out by the principal rivers. They were encompassed with extraordinary means of defence ; but the whole was the work of art, scarcely the slightest advantage being derived from nature.

The cities of antiquity, when sufficient time had passed to allow of their assuming some distinctive character, may be said to have been of three classes—the military, the commercial, and those in which these different elements are almost equally observable. Sparta and Rome have their place at the head of the military cities of antiquity. Tyre and Carthage bear a similar relation to the history of commerce. Even in these cities, the one object is not presented wholly separate from the other, but it acquires sufficient prominence to constitute character. In much the greater number, however, the arts of war and peace were more equally prosecuted. It was thus in the cities of Greece generally, and in all those opulent settlements which owed their existence to the enterprise of Greek colonists. Even Thebes and Memphis, and Babylon and Nineveh, were not more the centres of a vast military dominion, than the far-famed marts of ancient commerce.

The great military roads, which, after the fall of the Babylonian empire, stretched in various directions over the whole space between the Persian Gulf and the Egean sea, and between the country of the Nile and the sources of the Oxus and the Jaxartes, were all lines of communication between merchants, as much as between soldiers. Indeed, in those times, the machinery of commerce seemed to carry with it much more of the power

to perpetuate itself, than any dominion set up by the sword. Empires rose and fell in those ages with surprising rapidity. But while the wide frame-work of despotism was always liable to be thus broken in upon, and the guidance of it to be suddenly transferred to the hands of new masters, the companies of peaceful merchants continued to pace their way from one caravansera to another, and appear not to experience any great interruption even in the midst of such momentous changes. The last conqueror, whether the barbarian "shepherd king" from the pastoral steppes of Central Asia, or the civilized Mede from a more favoured territory, was in general sagacious enough to perceive that the wealth and power of empire must be derived mainly from the ingenuity and enterprise allied with commerce; and that no folly could, accordingly, be greater than that, which should leave the productive skill and extended traffic of their dominions without protection and encouragement.

Tyre, and the several trading cities which lined the coast of Phœnicia, were famous in almost every kind of manufacturing skill and industry, and became to the known world in those ages nearly everything which such towns as Manchester and Birmingham have become to the more widely-discovered nations of the earth in our own times. Navigators from those ports were found upon the waters of every sea. Merchants exposed the produce of those cities in every market, and bartered it with the rudest tribes on every shore, and in every recess of barbarism. During many centuries, they were the great discoverers, both by land and sea. Homer is loud in his praise of their genius in art, and of their enterprise in traffic. As we descend to a somewhat later

period in ancient history, evidence of their greatness in these respects is found to multiply on every hand. The cities of Arabia Felix were of a similar character. Their position, close upon the shores of the Red Sea, offered them the means of easy communication with a large portion both of Africa and Asia. Egypt was their neighbour. With the nations and empires which peopled the vast territory between the waters of the Hellespont and the shores of Cape Comorin, they were in constant intercourse. The wealth and civilization which they derived from those various countries, were such as to give to the narrow strips of the great Arabian Peninsula, in which they had their dwelling-place, the aspect of a garden in the wilderness, and to their works of art and public buildings the appearance of so many palaces in the desert. Even the cities of the greatest Asiatic princes, known to us mostly from their place in the history of military conquest and ambition, were hardly less famous among the people of those ages as the seats of artistical skill—the looms and the dyes of Babylon being such as to hold out a more permanent defiance to rivalry than the power of her kings.

But it is observable, that this commercial prosperity, great as it is known to have been, was realized in circumstances, which, in the history of European society, have commonly been fatal to such pursuits. If we except the trading cities of Phœnicia and Arabia, and those of the Greek colonists in Asia Minor and Africa, we look in vain to the cities or nations of the eastern world for the appearance of anything like a principle of self-government. During the age of the smaller monarchies in Asia, embracing the times of the Patriarchs, and those

of Moses and the Judges, the sovereign power, even in that quarter of the world, appears to have been occasionally elective, and subject to considerable limitation, though more as the effect of circumstances than in consequence of any clearly recognised principle in social policy. But, with the rise of the great monarchies, the ascendancy of the power of the sovereign, and of one or two privileged castes, became such as to leave nothing either of the appearance, or of the reality of power, to any portion of the people at large. In those great empires, both in Egypt and Asia, the warrior caste imposed some indirect check on the royal authority ; but the only truly formidable influence in relation to that object was supplied by religion.

In order, then, to our forming a just idea concerning the state of society among the nations of ancient Asia, it is important to bear in mind that the social system in that quarter of the globe has always embraced a recognition of the two leading castes above named—the warrior caste and the priest caste, together with some subordinate castes, as the agriculturalists and artisans, in more or less of their various grades and subdivisions. Now, upon this system of castes, the only system of protection in relation to person or property known in the East has been made to rest ; and the system so based, has always been the work, not of the magistrate, but of the priest—not a something provided by secular precaution, but a something devised by religion, and a something made strong by the sanctions of religion.

In this manner, the objects which enlightened Europeans have been solicitous to realize through a secular legislature, and by means of popular institutions, have

been sought by the orientalist, from the earliest time, as a good to be bestowed by the wisdom, and to be protected by means of the authority peculiar to religion. In such connexions, the highest earthly power has been that of the sovereign ; and to rise above him, it has been necessary that men should ascend to the supernatural. That the king should bow to any mortal authority would be accounted degrading ; but that he should do homage to the Divinity, as speaking through his accredited ministers, might be ascribed to his piety. Government in the East, accordingly, has always been of the nature of a theocracy. All castes are made to have their immunities, and every invasion of those immunities is branded, not only as an act of civil insubordination, but as being also an act of impiety. Hence the Koran, to this day, is at once the Bible and the Statute-book of the devout Moslem. Religion, upon this principle, has given law to social policy, and has moulded science, literature, and all things to its pleasure. Hence mental culture, whenever it has been made an object of system, or of direct training, has been always committed to the superintendence of the priesthood, and has extended comparatively little beyond persons of that order. The beautiful monuments which still arrest the eye of the traveller amidst the solitudes of the Thebais and of the Eastern world, may be regarded as the time-worn volumes on which those departed intellects have inscribed the tokens of their skill and learning. They were often men of profound thought ; but human freedom, in the European sense, was no object of their study. Institutions adapted to popular intelligence and suffrage, as in ancient Greece and modern Europe, have no place in oriental history :

and, what is more, the oriental mind has never shewn itself capable of regarding such innovations as being, in their case, either practicable or desirable. In this respect, the course of the Asiatics has been one circle from the beginning. In its season, it has always brought with it the same round, from rude conquest to corrupt civilization, followed by decay, suffering, and overthrow. Men have submitted to this course of things through all time, as to a sort of destiny. Even in the merchant cities adverted to, the principle of self-government, which did in some measure obtain, was so much the result of mere circumstances, and carried out with so little of definiteness or system, as to leave scarcely a trace of itself upon the page of history.

It will not now, perhaps, be difficult to imagine the appearances which would have presented themselves on our entering one of the great cities of the ancient East. Nor shall we be at a loss, possibly, to judge in respect to the cast of thinking which would be found to prevail among the different classes of its people, as we should mingle and converse with them. The masses on whom your eye would first rest, are the slave multitude, engaged in labour connected with the city traffic, or in the usual offices of domestic servitude. Mixed with these, you see, at certain seasons, the tillers of the ground conveying the produce of the surrounding country, or of more distant regions, along the different pathways leading from the city gates to the places appointed for its sale or lodgment. So passed along the streets of Tyre, "the 20,000 measures of wheat, and the twenty measures of pure oil" which Solomon sent, year by year, to that city, in exchange for a supply of firs and cedars obtained from

its sovereign. The merchant-king raised no corn, but his people were manufacturers and traders, and their manufactures and their wealth always sufficed to obtain supplies of that nature in abundance. Mingled with those who brought the produce of the rich lands of Syria into her cities, or who conveyed the harvests which teemed on the banks of the Euphrates or the Nile into the great cities which rose on the banks of those rivers, you see another and a more numerous class of men, of an aspect more city-worn, but more shrewd and more thoughtful—and those are the people skilled in useful and decorative art, such as build, and weave, and produce all kinds of manufactures, ministering in a thousand ways to the comfort of the poor, and to the luxury of the rich, by producing every matter of needful or curious workmanship. Such were the five hundred men employed by Hiram, of Tyre, in raising and adorning the temple and palaces of Solomon, Hiram himself being a man “filled with wisdom and understanding, and cunning to work all works in brass.” Turning from the crowds who pass their days thus amidst streets and factories, you cross the path of a more swarthy race, distinguished by their dress from all beside, and loitering about in groups, or busy beneath the scorching heat of an eastern sun, in unlading the sea-worn vessel of her burden—and these are they who “go down to the sea in ships, who do business in great waters, and see wonders in the deep.” In the same localities with these men, another order of persons may be seen, differing from all who have preceded; men on whose beards some forty summer suns have fallen, whose costume marks them as belonging neither to the priesthood nor the camp, while

their furrowed brow, and piercing eye, and superior presence, suffice to apprise you that these must be the great traffickers of their time, men who have explored the most distant regions by means of the coasting ships of Phœnicia or Arabia Felix, or by following the camel's track across the burning desert, or through the more dreaded passes of the Tauric mountains. Looking above these classes, and the many beside which make up the promiscuous crowd before you, your eye might next be directed to the state of the more luxurious in such communities, moving abroad in all the glittering pomp of eastern equipage. Among these the warrior caste is conspicuous, marshalled in their gorgeous trappings; but higher still is the place assigned to the men who bear the office of priesthood, whose sacred costume, and mystic services, and magnificent temples, are all of a nature to aid their pretensions as sole possessors of the higher order of intelligence, and as the sole channel through which the Infinite could be supposed to hold commerce of any kind with the dwellers in houses of clay!

Above all these gradations of mortal meanness, and of mortal greatness, is the place of the demi-god himself—the sovereign, whose abode, as seen in the instance of a Belshazzar, a Darius, or a Ramasses, may be regarded as presenting the most impressive image of his colossal empire. While your eye performs its travel up the vast altitude, and along the extended space of the royal dwelling-place,—and as you pass its gates, and move onward through the interminable wonders of its interior, everything appears as though called into existence to serve as the emblem of a sovereignty capable of bidding

defiance to the hand of man, and even to the power of time. While its external magnitude, its massy forms, and its gigantic strength, seem to proclaim it as the proper home of the world's power; its endless magnificence, disclosing itself everywhere through the regions within, seem to announce it with no less certainty as the appointed home of the world's opulence. As men gaze upon that marvellous spectacle, you see them submit at once to an impression of the awful. In the view of isolated man, any attempt to disturb the empire of which that object is the emblem, would seem to be hardly more destitute of hope than so much effort made to unsettle the resting-place of the great globe itself.

In such combinations of art, everything brilliant in the wealth of the world, and everything commanding in its princedoms and dominions, was exhibited as having its place in the hand of one favoured mortal. How natural that a superstitious people should regard such a disposal of the strength of the earth as the work of destiny, and that they should account it irresistible. Thus the arts have always done for despotic authority in the East, as they did in respect to the Christian priesthood in Europe during the middle age—they have raised structures, and lavished their adornments so as to have given visibility to the awfulness of power, and to have scared the boldest from the thought of resisting even the most vicious dominion which chance may have set up. It will probably be true, that should the power of the sovereign prove benignant, the millions beneath him, even in the most despotic state, may realize high comparative enjoyment. But in the system of such states, there is everything that must tend to preclude such

happy accidents in the case of sovereigns; and, at the same time, everything which can promise to perpetuate submission, let the ruling power be never so depraved.

The rule, accordingly, in all such connexions, will be, that the government will be a bad one; and when you look on the splendour of an Asiatic city, you must in consequence be careful to look beneath that deceptive exterior, if you would make any approach toward forming a true judgment with regard to its social character. It will then be seen, that such cities have always embraced every descending grade in the social, the moral, and the miserable. We may truly say of such places as we say of the grave,—that the small and the great are there, and that the wisest have their place side by side with the most brutish. The man who would explore the darkest recesses of ignorance, and crime, and wretchedness, will do well to go in search of them beneath the shadow of temples and palaces which have become the wonder of the world. Of the myriads who peopled the great cities of Asia, we have no reason to suppose that one in a hundred could read; nor does there appear to have been any oral system of instruction adapted to supply this broad manifest want. We know the effect of popular ignorance among ourselves, notwithstanding the influence of Christianity, and the amount of written and oral teaching. Hence, if London presents such awful masses of the impure and the revolting, what must the homes of the wretched, and the hiding-places of the infamous have presented in such cities as Thebes and Babylon, Antioch and Ephesus? In a city like London, we see a comparatively small portion of the community subject to those demoralizing influences, which came

with their full force upon the larger portion of it in the cities of ancient Asia, and from the effect in the one case, we may judge in some degree in relation to the other.

SECTION II.

ON THE GREAT CITIES OF ANCIENT EUROPE.—GREECE.

THE cities of the west exhibit scenes differing widely, for the most part, from those which have passed before us in the east. We find the monarchical power both in ancient Greece and in ancient Rome. But along with the progress of the people in numbers and intelligence, came popular institutions.

In the age of Homer, no one of the many small states into which Greece was then divided was without its sovereign. But subsequently various causes contributed to bring about the memorable transition from the monarchical to the popular form of government in Greek history. The disorders consequent on the absence of the Greek chiefs during the siege of Troy, appear to have been unfavourable to the royal authority. But during the four centuries succeeding the age of Homer, the Greeks spread themselves as colonists along the coast of Asia Minor, over the Greek islands, and over great part of the south of Italy; and beside possessing themselves of parts of Sicily, extended their settlements to a series of points on the shores of Africa separating between the territories of Carthage and the approach toward Egypt from the westward. These colonies were all so many common and independent ventures, wholly free from control on the part of the mother country, and as

such they naturally took the form of so many infant commonwealths. As republics, they soon became opulent and powerful, so as in many cases to equal, and even surpass, the states from which they were offshoots. The most striking effect of these successful migrations appears to have been, a gradual, but powerful reaction, on the parent country, in favour of republican institutions ; so that Greece, from having been everywhere monarchical, became everywhere republican, its governments consisting of a various admixture of aristocratic and democratic institutions—institutions which had respect everywhere to the gradations of class among citizens, but which nowhere recognised the old relation between sovereign and subject. It should be added, that the revolting effects of despotism in the east, operated no doubt very materially toward producing this memorable revolution in the political history of the west.

Greek history divides itself into four distinct periods. The fabulous period was followed by the heroic, or the age of Homer ; next came the four centuries of colonization and political revolution just adverted to ; and then the properly historical period, in respect to which Herodotus and Thucydides are our principal guides. During this last and great period in the history of Greece, the Greeks consisted for the most part of two races, the Dorians and Ionians, the Achæans being shut up in the narrow strip of territory to which they gave the name of Achaia, and the Eolians being virtually lost in the Dorians. To the Dorians, Sparta may be said to have been as the central or parent city : and Athens held the same relation to the Ionians. The Dorians possessed the greater part of the main land of Greece, the Ionians were confined to

Attica, a small peninsula, embracing not more than a twentieth part of the entire country. But the Ionians more than made up for their want of territory in Greece, by their footing in the Greek islands, by the greater extent of their colonies, by their naval power, their commerce, and their more varied and transcendent genius. The Spartans were eminently the warriors of Greece, and all their institutions were made to subserve their military ascendancy. In Athens, the citizen and the soldier were much more united, every refinement of taste being blended with the disciplined hardihood proper to the camp and the battle-field. It should be stated, however, that many of the cities of Greece, though peopled mostly by Dorians, bore a nearer resemblance to Athens, in the particulars mentioned, than to Sparta.

In the cities of Greece, during the republican period of its history, all offices were elective, and all functionaries were responsible. The people chose their own magistrates, and were parties in various degrees to the enactment and to the administration of their own laws. Each government being properly a city government, the principle of representation was no more needed in the state constitutions of ancient Greece, than in the municipal constitutions of our own towns and cities. It was within the power of the citizens to assemble themselves, as in common hall, and to attend to their own duties in their own persons, and such in the main was their practice. The democracy in each city consisted of the younger and less wealthy portion of the citizens—the aristocracy of the older and more opulent. But the rights of citizenship pertained only to privileged classes. There were settlers indeed in most of the towns of Greece,

who were free—ten thousand for example in Athens—a people who were not allowed to take any part in the making or the administering of the laws, or in regulating the public burdens, but who, in return for the payment of taxes, shared in the protection of the government. But much the greater part of the inhabitants of Greece were either in a state of positive servitude, or in a state of subjection to the privileged classes which can hardly be described by any other name. In Attica, when it contained 528,000 persons, 400,000 were slaves. In connexion with Sparta, this disparity was still more on the unfavourable side, but in Argolis, the half of the population were free. This alliance between systems of liberty in favour of a few, and systems of oppression in relation to the many, is the great blot in the political retrospect of ancient Greece—much greater than that fickleness of the popular temper which was so bitterly felt by some of her greatest men in the most enlightened period of her history.

The religion of this extraordinary people was an elegant absurdity. It consisted of imbecilities which a child might have repudiated; but those imbecilities were adorned as the noblest conceptions of the intellect, and the most refined feelings of taste, could alone have adorned them. The objects of worship were men and women, and these were, in the greater part, examples of vice rather than of virtue. The priest, except when employed in the more humble duties of that office, was commonly a civil as well as an ecclesiastical functionary, a person called to service connected with religion for a time only, and, as being little more than a superintendent of ceremonies, possessed no dangerous

influence in virtue of his office. But what seemed to be wanting in the shape of authority and instruction, as directly connected with religion, was supplied to the Greek people, as it had never been supplied in the cities of any other people, by their general education, their laws, their literature, and their philosophy.

Of the success with which science and art were cultivated in Greece, it is not necessary to speak, except to observe, that the private dwellings of citizens, even of the most opulent and powerful, were always comparatively modest and unpretending, and that the wonders of Greek architecture, and the most memorable productions of Greek art, were all contributions dedicated to the honour of religion, or to the majesty of the state.

The more obvious defects in the social character of Greece may be traced, in part, to the want of some centralized representative system, adapted to prevent its several states from rushing into such frequent and disastrous conflicts with each other; in part, to the spirit of domestic faction which raged so commonly between the higher and lower classes of citizens, leading, in many instances, to acts of great violence and cruelty; and in part to the great disproportion between the unenfranchised and the free, which gave to each state a feeling of insecurity, and tended, as in all such cases, to demoralize both the victims of slavery and the men by whom it was imposed.

But with all its faults, it is in Greece that we see the nearest approach made in the ancient world toward an equal diffusion of human intelligence, and of human rights. Even there, the wisest had much to learn; but nowhere else, during four thousand years, did man unlearn so much which it was good to abandon, or make such ad-

vances in respect to principles which it was of the greatest importance to human happiness that he should learn to understand and adopt. As the Greek cities were in advance in this respect of the other cities of the world, so Athens was in advance of the other cities of Greece.

If these facts are borne in mind, it will not be difficult to imagine the scene which would be presented to the eye of an observant stranger on entering a flourishing Greek city. It exhibited society in a condition of great comparative equality, as regarded the distributions of wealth and political power. Servitude, prevalent as you see it to be, is less general, and less despotic, than in the east; and the intelligence existing is of a higher order, more generally diffused, and, in consequence of the non-existence of a dominant priest caste, much more exempt from the influence of superstition. Everything great in art—edifices of surpassing majesty and beauty, sculpture and painting characterized by the highest excellence, all bespeak, as they break anew upon you at every step, the majesty of the state, consisting of its free people, and not the greatness of some probably ill-taught and ill-governed mortal, whom chance has vested with supreme and irresponsible power. As you converse with the men about you, it becomes plain that obedience in their case is a service approved by intelligence, and animated by patriotism, and not an unreasoning submission prompted by a gloomy religious faith. Let the scene before you be that of Athens and its Piræus, and your eye rests at once on the husbandman and the artisan; on the domestic trader, and the foreign merchant; on the many who toil, and the many who have leisure;

on the man of letters, and on the man who has excelled in statesmanship ; on the military leader whose achievements have spread his name through the world, and on the artist whose works in marble or upon the canvas are no less celebrated—all these mingle together before you, the subjects of equal rights, and, judging from appearance, are alike conscious of their freedom, and alike happy in its exercise. In short, a flourishing Greek city exhibited society in the highest state of mental and moral improvement to which it has been found possible that man should attain, apart from a divinely-attested religion, and from the influence of that religion as extended to the social relations.

It must not be supposed, however, that the obscure dwelling-places of depravity and suffering which we account as belonging to all cities, had no existence at Athens. When in its greatest prosperity, that city numbered ten thousand houses, and its population rose to about one hundred thousand persons. Of that number, twenty thousand men were enfranchised citizens, and ten thousand were free settlers ; which, with their respective families, constituted the free population, leaving the remainder to consist, for the most part, of persons in a state of servitude. This prevalence of domestic servitude presents a feature of marked difference in an ancient, as compared with a modern city. It had its good effect, as well as its evil. It left much fewer of the needy to float on, isolated and unowned, with the stream of society. But considerable masses were in such a condition at all times, and there were circumstances at particular junctures which added greatly to their numbers. In Athens, accordingly, as in all such places, we must

look beneath the brilliant exterior which meets the eye of the stranger in the principal streets, if we would judge correctly in respect to its social character.

After the defeat of the Persians, Athens attained the greatness of its naval and commercial power. The number and beauty of its buildings; its constant sources of amusement, particularly in its shows and theatres, and the charm of its society, embracing in the higher class the most refined taste for everything belonging to the culture of art and literature, and descending in a measure from the highest to the lowest—all contributed to render Athens a place of much attraction to foreigners. As a place of trade also, Athens possessed many advantages. The civilized world in those times bordered on the Mediterranean, and Athens was equally in the centre of that world and in the centre of Greece. Its spacious and well-protected harbours at the Piræus, though some miles from the city, were so connected with it by means of extended and massy walls, as to be a part of it, and presented to the gaze of the stranger, as his vessel floated in from the neighbouring sea upon its quiet waters, its public squares, its temples, its magazines, its market-places, and its busy commercial crowds whose activity gave to the Piræus an appearance of animation not always found in Athens itself. The merchandise imported at the Piræus, consisted in great part of timber for ship-building, fur, leather, wax, and other raw produce from the Black Sea and the Mediterranean, also gold, iron, and copper, wine from the Egean Islands, and carpets and fine wool from Phrygia and Miletus. But the great import was corn. One-third of the people of Attica depended for subsistence on supplies of foreign

corn. Hence the Athenians had their corn laws, but they were framed to operate as a bounty on imports of corn, and as a prohibition on exports. But Attica furnished large exports in other things. Its figs, and olives, and honey, were greatly celebrated. The coast of Laurium was rich in silver, lead, and metallic earths. Its fisheries were productive, and some of its marbles were of beautiful quality. But its manufactures were a branch of its exports more in demand than its natural productions—especially its cloth, leather, armour, hardware, earthenware, and jewellery.

Still, though trade became so much an object of pursuit and policy in Athens, we find that something of the prejudice in relation to it, which has been observable in most countries, continued to linger even in that city. Income derived from land was more esteemed than an income derived from trade. "The best nation," says Aristotle, "is a nation of agriculturists." Hence in Athens, the immediate work of handicraft, and even retail dealing, were confined almost entirely to the slave population. But citizens might be the proprietors of manufactories, and still be persons of reputation. In this sense, Cleon, the great demagogue, was a tanner; and Demosthenes himself was a sword-maker, an establishment of that nature having descended to him from his father, and being retained under his own superintendence. Such persons generally possessed a large number of artisan slaves, and when not employed in their own service, these persons were let out to other masters, so as to become a constant source of profit.

We learn very little from the historians or poets of ancient Greece with regard to the details of the society

which was thus constituted. Thucydides describes the Greek people under certain general aspects, and in certain public connexions; and in the hands of Aristophanes, individual history and private life become too often only so much caricature. It is from the orators of Greece, more than from any other source, that we become acquainted with the Greek people in their domestic life, and in their daily intercourse and dealings with their neighbours. It is also from the forensic and less known compositions of the Greek orators, that we derive the largest measure of this kind of information.

An Athenian jury consisted of some four or five hundred—sometimes of a thousand citizens. No class of men existed as advocates by profession, though sometimes orators did act in that capacity, but more commonly their province was restricted to advice, and to preparing arguments and even speeches, which the plaintiff or defendant was to use as he best might in his own cause. In the course of these speeches, we meet with many lively pictures of the capitalist of that day. His general appearance is that of a man of much wariness and prudence, but active, bustling, full of enterprise, and ready to embark in any speculation where there appeared a reasonable chance of profit. Now he comes before you in the act of lending his money on some perilous adventure across the sea; and then, as fixing his eye intently on the course of the borrower. You see him in the harbour, careful to observe that the goods on which his money has been advanced are placed duly on board; and again, in his counting-room, giving directions about the sort of sale which is to be attempted in the foreign port, and the sort of cargo which is to be

brought home. In all matters of this nature, you see our thrifty trafficker careful that everything in the shape of a mercantile agreement is committed to writing ; and no less careful that his payments are made in the presence of witnesses. In short, the transactions which come before you in the proceedings of the Athenian courts of law, shew the man of business in that city to have been, in all material respects, much such as we find him at this day in London or in Liverpool.

But the virtues necessary to a prosperous commerce, in common with all other virtues, are liable to decay. In the history of Athens this truth has melancholy illustration. In the age of Demosthenes the Athenians had become a degenerate race. Levity and indolence had taken the place of patriotism and honourable ambition. "If the warning voice of the orator was able to rouse them from their lethargy, to a sense of shame and danger, to courage and to exertion—if for a short period, under his administration, the arms of Athens seemed to prosper, and her hopes to revive, it stands among many proofs, how much may be accomplished by the efforts of one great mind. Alas, the spark kindled by his breath was soon extinguished ! The men who, with a spirit worthy of better days, resisted Philip on the plains of Chæronea, paid divine honours to the profligate Demetrius, and lodged him in one of the apartments of their tutelary goddess.

"The same sort of vices were exhibited in their private as in their public life. With gay and social dispositions, they had no firm or high principle. Capable of noble sentiments, they had not the resolution to act upon them. Generous they were, but more generous

than just. For one man who resembled Aristides, there were thousands who emulated the less noble traits of Themistocles.”*

Demosthenes remarks before a jury, that it was a wonderful thing in his time to find a merchant both honest and industrious. Such an observation must have had some foundation in truth, or it could not have been expedient to utter it in such a connexion. Isocrates observes, “When I was a boy, wealth was considered so secure and honourable, that all men gave themselves out to be richer than they really were. Now, to be wealthy is a crime, and a man must clear himself of the charge, if he wishes to remain in safety.” There may be something of the querulous old man of eighty-two in this observation, but it is reasonable to conclude that the orator was well aware that the persons to whom he addressed that sentiment would be conscious that it was not without a large measure of truth. What man in our time would think of urging a jury to deliver a favourable verdict, on the ground that they would derive pecuniary benefit from so doing in common with himself? But such an appeal could be made without any apprehension that it might be felt as an insult, and even with a feeling of confidence that it might be made with success, in an Athenian court of justice. When Demosthenes declared before another of these assemblies, that he knew there were other considerations, beside those affecting the right and justice of the case submitted to them, which would determine their verdict concerning it, his language was to the effect, not only that the said

* Translation of Select Speeches of Demosthenes, with Notes. By Charles Rann Kennedy, Esq. Preface, 3—7.

judges were not honest, but that they were men who were not concerned even to be thought honest. Æschines, in the course of one of his speeches, charged Demosthenes with having swindled a young man out of his fortune. The charge was true, or not true. If true, what must we think of a people who could allow a swindler to rise to such eminence ; and if not true, as was no doubt the case, what must we think of a jury, consisting of some hundreds of citizens, which could tolerate the utterance of such a calumny. But the conduct of Æschines, in this particular, was the common practice. Disputants sought to gain their object by heaping the grossest personalities upon each other, and upon the witnesses who happened to appear against them, so as to convert the courts of justice into places where the spirit of slander might be indulged almost without limit. Nor were these utterances the outbursts of passion at the moment—they were commonly matter supplied with elaborate preparation.

Circumstantial evidence was preferred to direct evidence ; and the testimony of slaves, which might be obtained by torture, was deemed more trustworthy than that of freemen, which could not be extorted by such means. While the credit of freemen generally was thus low, we are further told that Athens abounded with informers and false witnesses, each of whom had his price. One case has come down to us in which a plaintiff appears in court demanding the moiety of an estate, on the ground of a fraud which had been practised between himself and the defendant, with a view to the possession of it, the equal division of the property, which the defendant now refused, having been the condition of the

compact between them. The facts admitted by the plaintiff would, in this country, have stamped him with infamy, and subjected him to penalties for a misdemeanor; yet he calmly urges them as the foundation of a legal demand, and endeavours to exact contribution from his partner in the fraud. Nor have we reason to suppose that there was anything peculiar in this case; on the contrary, the whole manner of the plaintiff is such as to warrant an opposite conclusion. If such were the displays made of moral feeling in connexion with the most solemn proceedings in courts of justice, what are we to infer from it in respect to the state of morals generally? *

But it will, perhaps, be said, these are indications touching the morals of private life at a period when it is admitted the Athenians had degenerated from a former state of virtue. Let this be admitted. If we go back, however, to the age of Pericles—the age of Athenian splendour—when this degeneracy had made much less progress, we meet with evidence of depravity in that period which is sufficiently humiliating. During the ascendancy of that great statesman, came the demoralizing effects of the Peloponnesian war. In the train of war came pestilence, and the scenes connected with the ravages of the plague in Athens, as set forth by Thucydides, an eye-witness of them, afford melancholy proof with regard to the degree in which the highest state of refinement in a class, may be allied with the lowest state of selfishness and inhumanity in the mass of the people.

* Translation, &c., by Kennedy, preface. The other secondary authorities, which might be cited in support of the statements in this section, are such as Wachsmuth, Müller, Hermann, and Heeren.

Having described the natural horrors of the scene around him, the historian proceeds to touch upon its moral aspect. "In a calamity so outrageously violent, and such universal despair," he observes, "things sacred and holy had quite lost their distinction. Nay, all regulations observed before in matters of sepulture were quite confounded, since every one buried where he could find a place. Some whose sepulchres were already filled by the numbers which had perished in their own families, were shamefully compelled to seize those of others. They surprised, on a sudden, the piles which others had built for their own friends, and burned their dead upon them ; and some, whilst one body was burning on a pile, tossed another body they had dragged thither upon it, and went their way. Thus did the pestilence give the first rise to those iniquitous acts which prevailed more and more in Athens ; for every one was now more easily induced openly to do what for decency they did only covertly before. They saw the strange mutability of outward condition—the rich untimely cut off, and their wealth pouring suddenly on the indigent and necessitous, so that they thought it prudent to catch hold of speedy enjoyments and quick gusts of pleasure, persuaded that their bodies and their wealth might be their own merely for the day. Not any one continued resolute enough to form any honest or generous design, when so uncertain whether he should live to effect it. Whatever he knew could improve the pleasure or satisfaction of the present moment, that he determined to be honour and interest. Reverence for the gods or the laws of society laid no restraint upon them ; either judging that piety or impiety were things quite indifferent, since they saw that all men

perished alike, or throwing away every apprehension of being called to account for their enormities, since justice might be prevented by death ; or rather as the heaviest judgments to which man could be doomed were already hanging over their heads, snatching this interval of life for pleasure before it fell."*

This description, it will be perceived, is meant to set forth the spirit and conduct of the people of Athens generally during this alarming visitation. The picture which it presents is that of an almost unrelieved mass of suffering and selfishness. It was a season in which the good or evil in the heart of the people of Athens might be expected to become manifest. Of the former, how few traces are discoverable ! Of the latter, how revolting is the exhibition ! From the temper which men display when visited with the greater evils of life, we may judge in a measure of the manner in which they would be found to conduct themselves towards each other on occasions of ordinary exigency or suffering ; and we may well fear, that the humanity which proved so greatly wanting in a time of direst necessity, was a humanity of slender root and little warmth at any time.

It is true, similar effects have always been attendant on such calamities ; and had the plague of Athens fallen upon a ruder people, it would no doubt have served to call forth the hidden depravity of the human heart in forms still more revolting. We must see men destitute of the feeling of civilized life, subject to such a visitation, before we can judge of the excesses to which it might lead in such a quarter. Our complaint is not that the

* History of the Peloponnesian War. Book II. Second Year.

high civilization of Athens had done nothing for its people in this respect, but that it should be found, in the hour of trial, to have done so little—so little, especially when compared with what has been done by Christianity among communities very much below the Athenians in general cultivation. The efforts of the humane and generous, during the plague in London, in 1666, might be appealed to as exhibiting a strong contrast to the apparently total absence of such exertions, on the part either of private persons or of the public authorities, among a people so refined as were the citizens of the capital of Attica in the age of Pericles.

During such calamities in more recent times, and in the case of other virulent epidemics, as typhus and cholera, how different has been the conduct of the ministers of religion, of medical practitioners, and of society generally. Nothing has been more common at such seasons, than that the Christian minister should be seen giving many days and nights to the performance of the last offices of religion in favour of the dying at the constant and known peril of his life. At such times, it is the hold of faith upon the future which can alone be expected to give man steadiness of purpose sufficient to meet the dangers of the present. The social virtue of Athens was not based on such a faith, and the feebleness which characterized that virtue was the natural consequence. With so absurd a religious system, it was unavoidable that every step of their progress in natural intelligence, should be so much done to generate religious scepticism.

We repeat, that we are far from meaning to intimate, by observations of this nature, that civilization had done nothing for the Athenians, because it had not done every-

thing. We say not that the social position of that extraordinary people is not to be accounted as a good at all, because it was not a good of the highest order. It is a memorable example of the progress which was found to be attainable in this shape, apart from the hopes and sanctions of revealed religion, and its defects admonish us concerning the greater good to be accomplished in the purposes of Providence through the influence of that religion. It is admitted that it was a civilization, which, while it redeemed the people from the vices of barbarism, brought along with it vices of its own. But an attempt to prove that their latter state was an improvement upon the former would be an insult to the understanding. The Athenian was as much an improvement, intellectually and morally, upon the wanderer over the steppes of Tartary, or upon the mere tiller of the ground in any region, as the Christian is an improvement upon the Athenian. But while we admit the attainments of the Athenian, we have seen something of his deficiencies, and it is from a scrutiny of both that our judgment of his character must be formed.

SECTION III.

ON THE GREAT CITIES IN ANCIENT EUROPE.—ROME.

THE state of society in Rome during the republican period of its history bore so near a resemblance to that which obtained in Greece, in connexion with the same order of political institutions, that little need be said in this place concerning it. It should be observed, however, that Rome exhibited a spirit and character, during

the sway of her republican institutions, which was more adapted to remind an observer of Sparta than of Athens. During the first five centuries of its existence, the great object of its policy was to excel in war and government. Safety, aggression, and the best mode of retaining large territory when acquired, were the points on which the genius of Rome was fixed as with the force and constancy of an hereditary passion. Subsequently to the period named, the Roman citizen began to direct his attention beyond the range of the more useful arts to those of embellishment, and the comparatively rude, but powerful sagacity, which had been applied with so much success to the art of war, and to the questions of domestic policy, was in some degree softened and improved by the direct and indirect influence of Greek literature.

The government of Rome, in common with all the governments of Greece, was municipal—a government restricted to a single city, though its administration extended by degrees to a large adjacent territory. The same may be said of Carthage. The patrician influence in Rome was the point which mainly distinguished its institutions from those of Sparta, and which gave them a stronger likeness to the more aristocratic institutions of Carthage. Carthage, moreover, was distinguished from both the cities named, as bestowing greater attention upon agriculture ; as partaking in a greater degree of a commercial spirit, consequent on its relation to its parent city Tyre ; and as always evincing a proneness to depend upon the arms of its mercenaries, more than upon the virtue and patriotism of its citizens, or upon the cordial friendship of its allies. To this latter cause we must ascribe the fall of Carthage. The opulent and

noble families learnt to employ their wealth and power in corrupting the dependent and the poor. All the grades of office and emolument came to have their place among the things which were constantly bought and sold. Disease was thus fixed on the vitals of the state, and it perished accordingly.

With the ceasing of the Roman republic, and the establishment of the empire, came a period which might be described, more than any other previous to our own time, as the age of great cities. Rome, at that time, was the most wonderful city the world had ever seen, considered in respect to its wealth, its military power, and the discipline and force of intellect by which it was characterized. Other cities, reflections of itself in nearly everything except magnitude, rose in almost incredible numbers in every direction. The ruins of Baalbec and Palmyra carry the imagination back to a period removed some two thousand years from our own time, and those monuments still fill us with astonishment, and are regarded as deserving a place among the proudest works of the greatest capitals. But so common were such stupendous and beautiful creations in those times, that the building of the cities just named does not appear to have obtained even a passing notice from contemporaries, and we are left to judge in great measure concerning their origin, and their ancient magnificence, from the stately fragments which have survived the revolutions of so many centuries. The whole of the countries bordering on the Mediterranean abounded in cities, just such as Antioch and Alexandria, Herculaneum and Pompeii, are known to have been.

Now, it should be observed, that in all cities under the

sway of imperial Rome, the sword was the presiding power. Commerce was protected, and during a long interval was, upon the whole, prosperous. Science, and learning, and civilization generally, were all patronised and diffused, but in such forms, and to such extent only, as was deemed compatible with the objects of an arbitrary military government. Every great city was the residence of a portion of the higher class, possessing large wealth, and living in a style of princely magnificence. In the train of this class came literary men, in considerable numbers, and in every shade of merit or demerit; orators who realized the fortunes of nobles, with others who continued briefless to the end of their days; architects, sculptors, painters, decorators, including men of the highest and men of the humblest attainments. Next came the multitude of shopkeepers, and their families, all vieing with each other in extravagance and expense; and below these, the humbler class of artisans, consisting for the most part of such portions of the slave population as were not employed in domestic service.

Thus next to the power of the sword, came the power of wealth; the departments which furnished occupation to mind and taste, and those which embraced the humbler forms of industry, serving as lower steps in the social gradation. In those cities, not a trace remained of that more equalized distribution of wealth, or of that diffused political power, which is so observable in the free states of Greece, and in the early history of Rome. In the grandeur of their houses and in the costliness of their establishments, the wealthy patricians were as princes, and a passion for appearance and indulgence marked all classes through the long downward course—

from the greatest to the meanest, from the richest to the poorest.

It scarcely need be remarked that this was a very corrupt kind of civilization. Corrupt as it was, however, it tended, no doubt, to curb depravity in some of its forms. At the same time, there were other respects in which it could not fail to give to the evil tendencies of our nature a greater degree of strength, and all the fixedness natural to a highly artificial system. In the pages of the Roman satirists, we find vivid and highly-finished pictures of the manners which became prevalent from these causes. In modern cities, the idler, the epicure, the rake, the gambler, the unchaste woman, and the intriguing menial, all have their place ; but they will appear to be of limited occurrence, and commonly inexperienced in their respective vocations, if compared with the same classes in the cities of the Roman empire.

In all those cities, selfishness, taking, in the general, the form of sensuality, became the great feature of society. How could it be otherwise ? The suffrages of the military determined the succession to the throne, and the man who was raised to that dignity by the votes of a rude soldiery, became the sole authority in regard to all matters of law and government. Rulers elevated by such means, and placed in possession of such power, are naturally jealous of talent, and of every man who becomes popular. Such men exist, accordingly, as an incubus on the mind of the state. Men of ability do not fail to see, that, in such a connexion, to obtain favour, they must become sycophants ; and that to retain such favour when obtained, they must be prepared to wage a perpetual war with rival sycophants. It generally happens, in conse-

quence, that the men who become conspicuous in such governments are persons of very moderate ability, or persons capable of exercising their sagacity in the way of profound dissimulation. The established religion of the Roman empire was a frivolous and degrading superstition; and the form and spirit of the government was despotic—so that scarcely an incentive to virtue could be derived, either from the prospect of a future world, or from the posture of affairs in the present. The wonder is, not that a people in such circumstances should have become very much depraved—it is surprising, rather, that virtue sufficient to perpetuate the social system should so long have survived.

Within the circle of ancient Rome, there was one spot which may serve more readily than any other to convey a picture to the eye of the imagination directly illustrating the state of society in that great city. Our reference is to the Flavian amphitheatre, better known, from its colossal size, by the name of the Colosseum. The edifice so named was raised by Titus and Vespasian, in commemoration of the capture of Jerusalem. It stood at a centre, encircled by the slopes of the principal hills included within the walls of the ancient city. The circle formed by the outer perpendicular wall of this building, rose story after story; so as greatly to overtop every structure in its neighbourhood. It presented a multitude of apertures for ingress and egress, all communicating with their respective corridors. In the interior, if you looked down from its sloping galleries toward the centre, you there saw a large circular even space, with a wall rising up to some twelve or sixteen feet around it, and a series of doors opening at given distances upon the same level

with the stage. Above the line of this circular wall was the first bench, and from that point rose bench after bench, each taking in the whole circumference, and the whole ascending in one unbroken rise from the stage, down at the centre of the building, to the full summit of the great exterior wall. The sitting and standing room provided in this vast basin, was sufficient to accommodate a hundred thousand persons.

Here, then, the question naturally arises—for what object was this building designed? It was a building, to which existence could not have been given, except by a people who had something like the plunder of a world at their command. It is manifest that those who well knew the taste of the people of Rome had reason to think that the spectacles exhibited in the amphitheatre were a matter of so much popular interest that a hundred thousand persons might be expected to crowd themselves together as eager witnesses of them. What, then, were those spectacles?

One of the heaviest accusations that can be brought against the civilization of ancient Rome, is contained in the answer to this question. The exhibitions of the amphitheatre were restricted to scenes of conflict, the nature of which seemed to bespeak the community that could delight in them as a people without mercy. Animals of the greatest strength and ferocity—such as lions, panthers, and leopards, were turned into the area of the theatre by pairs, by scores, and by hundreds, and were there stimulated to the most furious encounters with each other. Their savage struggles were the amusement of the spectators; their groans and yells were coveted as a kind of music. The vast area strewed

with limbs and carcasses, and crimsoned with gore, was deemed a sight good to look upon.

Nor was this all. Cruelty did not stop at this point. Men were made to appear within that area, and to minister to the popular excitement by engaging in mortal combat, sometimes with their fellow-men, and sometimes with the most ferocious animals. Some of these combatants were gladiators by profession, men trained to such exercises, after the manner of our own boxers. But beside these, many of whom perished by the hands of their antagonists, it frequently happened that many hundreds of human beings were given up, day after day, to the fury of beasts, the groans and terror of the sufferers becoming an element of enjoyment to those who looked on, and who rarely failed to call eagerly for the continuance of the struggle on the part of the exhausted remnant who survived, while the space about them had become covered with mangled bodies, and red with the blood of those who had met their fate in the earlier stages of the onslaught. The men who were compelled to take part in these combats were sometimes criminals ; but captives taken in war, and not unfrequently, as in the case of the primitive Christians, persons whose offences were more imaginary than real, were doomed to become just so much material appointed to minister to the popular passion for such spectacles.

Nor must we suppose that they were the lowest of the people only, who appeared to be deeply interested in such scenes. The spectators of the amphitheatre embraced every gradation of the state, from the lowest to the highest. Consuls, senators, and ambassadors from distant nations, youth and age, both sexes, the Roman

matron and the vestal virgin, all the pomp and refinement of Rome, along with all its rudeness and brutality, —all might be there seen. But such was the eagerness of the common people to witness such sights, that from the time of Pompey and Cæsar downwards, the public man concerned to become popular, was always careful, if possible, to exceed the munificence of his predecessors in the shows of this nature provided at his expense.

Now we have to follow the people who were capable of deriving so much pleasure from such scenes, and of doing so, not only day after day, but even week after week, to their homes, and to their connexions with public life, and it is hardly possible to avoid much unwelcome thought as regards the selfishness and hardness of heart which they must have carried with them into such relations. If such are the displays of feeling which come before us as from the house-top, surely there is hardly a form of domestic cruelty or social injustice, that we may not expect to find among the more concealed history of such a people. If in our own great cities, where the exhibitions of the amphitheatre would be at once put down by the general feeling as too brutish to be endured, we still find so much depravity, what may we suppose to have been discoverable among the masses of Rome, to whom such amusements were the most pleasurable that wealth or genius could supply? The Athenians sought their favourite relaxation in the comparative harmlessness and humanity of the drama, sustained as it was by the genius of an Æschylus, a Sophocles, a Euripides, or an Aristophanes. Among the Romans the drama was almost superseded by the barbarian shows of the amphitheatre, places furnished with

their material of amusement by the genius of a Nero or a Caligula.

We may hope that the domestic habits of the Romans were not so deeply vitiated, in consequence of their familiarity with such scenes, as it might seem reasonable to expect. In regard, however, to their policy toward their allies, and toward the vanquished, it was in general as devoid of the just and the humane as the man who should have gazed on that same people when assembled in the Colosseum might have ventured to prognosticate.

Rome became powerful through a severe exercise of the virtues proper to a military greatness ; and the rigour of the discipline which she imposed upon herself with a view to conquest, was exceeded in the severity which she inflicted on the vanquished, in order that those conquests might be retained. The custom of making a triumphal entry into the city after victory, which may be traced back to the earliest period of its history ; the practice of dividing the spoils taken in war equally among the citizens, which in the early days of the republic gave an equal interest in the issues of the conflict to those who remained at home, and to those in the field ; the limited period during which the consular office could be sustained, and the consequent necessity of promptitude and vigour, if the brief sovereignty of those functionaries was to be distinguished by the only kind of achievement which could give it celebrity ; the rigour with which military exercises were imposed, so as to cause the labours of a campaign to be almost a relief, if compared with the daily evolutions of the Campus Martius ; the usage in the better days of the republic of dividing the public lands on some principle of equality among the citizens, so as to cause

the Roman army to consist of citizens, and not of the refuse of the people, enabling a small city to sustain a large army, and giving to the home of Romulus less the aspect of a city than of a garrison ; and beside all this, the pride which taught the Roman never to listen to terms of peace in a season of disaster, and the good sense which prompted him to incorporate in his own military tactics whatever he found available in the tactics of other nations—all these causes, and more, contributed to that ascendancy of the Roman people, which has become one of the great facts in the history of humanity.

It would be pleasing if we were permitted to contemplate so much concentration and energy as directed toward good ends, rather than toward objects of a different complexion. Good, no doubt, resulted from the successes of the Roman arms, their conquests being everywhere the precursor to their civilization. The Romans were a comparatively virtuous people when the Greeks had ceased to be such. Rome became the patron of art, and the conservator of civilization, when Athens was no longer competent to that office. With the diffusion of her conquests it was the interest—a natural element of the greatness of Rome, to diffuse industry, commerce, and intelligence. The splendour of her allies was her own splendour. The wealth and greatness of her subjects were her own wealth and greatness. Her sway was brilliant as well as powerful, because brilliancy as well as power had become natural to her pride. Hence, in whatever measure a high degree of civilization may be deemed preferable to barbarism, insomuch a large portion of the human race may be said to have been the

better in consequence of the power realized by Roman ambition. In this manner, millions of the human race were brought under the influence of the arts, and of the various elements of social improvement, to whom they would otherwise have been unknown ; in this manner, the principles of civilization were expanded and strengthened, in countries where they had obtained some root ; and in this manner Rome became the great means in handing down to modern times, nearly all the treasures which have been preserved to us from the literature, and science, and general intelligence of the ancient world.

What course human affairs might have taken in these respects if Rome had not sent the good and evil of her ascendancy so completely, and during so long a period, over the civilized world, can only be matter of conjecture. It may be that there was no necessity that the long night of the middle age should have had any place in history. It may be, that had the nations of the earth, at the commencement of the Christian era, been left to their own separate resources, they would many of them have put forth new vigour, and the thousand years of social deterioration which followed might have been a thousand years of social progress. Rome did much to mitigate the evils of barbarism during those years, and, as an eminent conservator of the treasures of art and literature, has done much since toward putting a period to those evils. It may be, however, that the evils themselves should be accounted as solely of its own producing.

But whatever uncertainty there may be in such speculations, it is no matter of uncertainty, that the foreign policy of ancient Rome, beneficial as it may have been in some respects, was too often of a nature to be fully in

keeping with the feeling displayed by its people when assembled in encircled myriads within the walls of the Colosseum. The end proposed was, that Rome should be the mistress of the world, and no means, promising success, could be too fraudulent, mendacious, or cruel, to be put into requisition toward that end. If, for example, a faithful ally subdued some neighbouring enemy to the Roman power—in order that the victor might not, as the consequence, be influenced by any dangerous notions of self-importance, he commonly found the reward of his service in being reduced to insignificance in his turn. When it became expedient to pick a quarrel with any state, an ambassador was perhaps sent, who was studious to give himself such imperious airs, as might provoke expressions of resentment; these expressions were then construed as an insult to the majesty of the Roman people, and the meditated war commenced. If a vanquished prince was permitted to retain possession of his throne, it was generally that he might exist in a state of weakness as a mere tool of taxation, and in consequence, as an object of hatred or contempt. Or it might be, that the elder son of such a prince was retained as a hostage at Rome, and every sort of submission was exacted of him as the condition of not finding his son cut off by the hand of the executioner, or set up in his room. Sometimes captive monarchs were made to bequeath their kingdoms to the Roman people, and possession was taken of them accordingly. When a free city was subdued, it was not unusual to give secret encouragement to a party within it who should be clamorous in favour of the ancient laws, but only that pretexts might not be wanting for making the will of the senate

the only law. It never ceased to appear, that all conquests made by allies, were made, not for themselves, but as so much acquisition to the territory of Rome. Terms of peace accepted to-day, were often followed by new demands to-morrow ; and the prince who had been duped into a state of comparative weakness by the late treaty, found himself obliged to submit to greater humiliations still, or to renew the war at greater disadvantage than before. Such methods of proceeding were not incidents of rare occurrence ; on the contrary, the policy of Rome may be said to have been based upon such maxims.* So truly did the prophet Daniel speak of the genius of this empire, when he described it as one that should “ devour the whole earth, tread it down, and break it in pieces ;” as having “ teeth of iron,” and as being “ dreadful, and terrible, and strong exceedingly.”†

As the fourth and fifth centuries advanced, and the barbarians descended, wave after wave, upon the Roman territory, the feebleness of the widely-extended machinery of the empire became more and more manifest. At that time, the Roman state may be said to have been made up of six classes. The first class consisted of the patrician families, who had become the great landholders, the holders of land in small portions having almost wholly disappeared. Next came the inhabitants of large towns, particularly those of Rome and of Constantinople ; these consisted in part of traders and artisans, who found their chief employment in ministering to the

* On this subject see Montesquieu on the Causes of the Grandeur and Decline of the Romans.

† Chap. vii. 7. 23.

luxuries of the rich, and in part of a low rabble, who depended less upon their honest industry, than upon the stated largesses which were dealt out to them by the opulent. Next came the inhabitants of smaller towns, who were generally very poor, and in every way abject—the deteriorating causes which had put an end to small landholders, having contributed their influence to put an end to small towns. The fourth class consisted of the free labourers engaged in agriculture, whose social condition was not much preferable to that of the slaves toiling by their side. The slave population, both in the provinces and the cities, was the fifth class. The sixth consisted of organized banditti, who took possession of the forests and mountains, spreading themselves oftentimes, with the force and discipline of an army, over the open country, and bearing away everything moveable.

The territory of the great landholders mentioned, was in general so large, that a person of that class would often need to travel some thirty or forty miles to hold communication with a neighbour. The property and the lives of these persons were safe only as each kept up a kind of garrison to secure them. This necessity was in itself sufficient to put an end to the cultivators of small estates. The slave labourers, who constituted no mean portion of the property of this class, sometimes amounted to ten, fifteen, and even twenty thousand. In general, each slave had to perform his daily labour with a log and chain upon him. The food and clothing of these unhappy persons were of the coarsest description, and at night they were lodged under a guard in miserable out-houses.

The natural consequence followed. We learn from

the laws of those times, that the owners of these slaves lived in constant apprehension of being poisoned or otherwise murdered by them. The people inhabiting the large towns were in general very depraved. The lower classes, especially in Constantinople, which had become the great city of the empire, discovered the same passion for chariot races, which formed the amusements of the circus, as had been evinced by the Romans for the amusements of the amphitheatre. Corrupt as Christianity became in those ages, among its good effects we have to reckon the suppression of the gladiatorial shows. But, unhappily, the circus was converted into a great incentive to faction. The competitors in the race were distinguished by different colours ; and as these colours were allied with the parties and factions into which the city was divided, the excitement of the circus ministered constantly to the intensity of the most discordant passions. While under such excitement, these people became oftentimes very formidable as mobs, though they could never be trusted in the face of an enemy.

When rulers conduct themselves toward the people of the state as though they were children, dooming them in the affairs of government to a complete passiveness, and to the social incapacity natural to passiveness, it is to be expected that they should proceed one step further, and conduct themselves toward the people as toward children in the matter of amusement, providing them with such shows and gewgaws as may be pleasing to them. Despots often encourage frivolity among their victims, knowing that it might be a dangerous thing to encourage them in anything like grave or manly thinking. This was the course pursued through the Roman

empire, and with the usual effect. The people ceased to be dangerous to their rulers, but they ceased at the same time to be dangerous to almost any foe that chose to invade the territory of their rulers.

With the progress of decay, the small towns diminished, and became more and more abject; while the larger towns became still larger, and, with every augmentation, more disordered and unmanageable. Despotism finds no difficulty in placing its crushing hand upon a feeble remnant, or upon isolated man. It was in the crowd of a great city accordingly, that arbitrary power could be most readily evaded, and its jealous policy in some degree set at naught. The police arrangements of those times were not such as obtain at present among the great cities of continental Europe. It should be added, that the banditti hordes just now mentioned, were made up of the lawless, the necessitous, and the injured of all classes, especially of runaway slaves.

On the whole, it will be seen, that between these various classes, scarcely a link subsisted that could bring them to act in any case together, with a view to any common interest. Arms could not be placed in the hands of the slave, so much room was there to fear that they might be turned against the domestic oppressor, in place of being directed against the invader. Nor were the relations subsisting between the few and the many in the great cities much more trustworthy. Selfishness, taking the shape of cowardice and treachery, was so deeply rooted in such places, as to leave no feeling to which the name of patriotism could be given. That love of country which had been so intense a feeling in the small states of Greece, and not less so in Rome, while the

territory belonging to that city was of moderate extent, began to cease among men, as the landmarks of all countries began to be obliterated, in consequence of the setting up of an almost boundless military dominion. Men were brought, by this means, under many influences, all adverse to those strong local attachments, and to those sympathies arising from near association, which are so natural to the people of small, separate, and independent states. The local became lost in the general. What had given distinctness to the parts, was soon merged, in a great degree, in the sameness of the whole. Each country became only a unit in the mass. Each person learnt to regard himself in the same light. No man could be expected to feel in regard to a multitude of countries as he might have felt in regard to his own, had it possessed any separate existence, or any interest and character proper to itself. Even the Roman citizenship was necessarily weakened by diffusion ; and one of the strongest elements of social life became, in its turn, wholly ineffective. In short, it was thus in respect to all the ligaments of the body politic in those times. Unnatural expansion brought weakness, decay, and ruin. The selfish passions of man never collapse so completely as when he is thus separated from all immediate attachments, and obliged to feel as one overlooked and lost in a crowd. The crowd does not feel for him, and it is natural that he should not feel for the crowd. The roving banditti class adverted to, profited, as a matter of course, by all these causes of weakness.

It is manifest, from these various facts, that there could be no security for the existence of any regular government, except by means of a powerful and disciplined

army ; and to raise such an army from among such a people, and to procure the revenue necessary to its support from such a state of society, was the great difficulty to which the genius of the successive emperors was applied throughout the east and west. But even with a view to that limited object, the imperial sagacity proved eventually unavailing. The huge ill-compacted mass fell before the pressure of the barbarians.

SECTION IV.

ON THE GREAT CITIES IN MODERN EUROPE.

THE Feudal System grew up amidst the ruins of the ancient civilization. The relation of lord and vassal, elementary in social history as it was, served to place the superior and the inferior once more under the influence of feelings which had respect to a common interest ; and, in this manner, bound them together by the ties of a mutual fidelity and friendship. The bonds of society were so far replaced, and life and health began slowly to return. The elements of popular liberty, inherent in the Gothic institutions of the new settlers, readily blended with something of the form of the ancient policy and jurisprudence, and contributed to the formation of the peculiar civic system which prevailed in Europe during the middle age, and which still exists as characteristic of the states of modern Europe in distinction from the states of antiquity.

While power passed from the hands of the victims of a corrupt civilization, to the ruder but stronger grasp of

the barbarians, most of the towns and cities of Europe survived the revolution, and with little visible change. With the signs of social improvement, which became observable through European society in the eleventh and twelfth centuries, came the practice of granting charters to boroughs and cities, and from that time the principle of self-government in our municipal system became more recognised and defined. The people of such towns chose their own officers, retained their own keys, and conducted their own affairs, the relation in which they stood to their feudal superior consisting in their payment of a moderate tribute, and in little beside that could affect their internal independence. Such were the liberties of the principal cities in Italy, Germany, and Flanders. England not only participated in these indications of social progress, but did so with happier effect than most of the countries on the Continent. Our boroughs soon became sufficiently important to send members to parliament, along with the knights of the shire, and both, so early as the reign of Edward III., sat together, constituting conjointly the second house of our legislature. Not less than seventy times during that single reign was this class of representatives assembled, and assembled in this form.

It is proper to observe in this place, that in regard to these legislators sent from boroughs, and those sent from counties no less, we see a principle of representation acted upon, which can hardly be said to have had any place in the free governments of antiquity. The Amphyctionic council and the Achæan league, among the Greeks, must have embraced a form of proceeding somewhat similar to our own practice in regard to political representation.

But the Amphyctionic council was unknown after the earlier and ruder period of Greek history; and the Achæan league came late, and was much too limited in its constitution and object to secure to the principle which it involved any considerable development. Had the states of Greece bound themselves together, in order to secure to their respective territories the blessings of peace amidst the contentions of their neighbours, as did the twelve towns of Achaia, Greece must then have had her congress, or central house of representatives; and the representative system exhibited in the constitution of the British House of Commons, and in the united provinces of the Low Countries and of America, would not have been left to make its appearance as a novelty in the history of political science. But the free states of the ancient world had no such centre of union. Their governments were all city governments—they began as such, and ended as such. Nor amidst the many exigences and changes in their history, did any juncture of affairs arise that can be said to have led them to entertain the thought that a permanent political centralization might be a benefit. The free neglected to make use of the principle of unity for good, and the despotic were thus left to make use of it for evil.

It is in the adoption, and in the working of this great principle; and in the attempt to harmonize a monarchical power with the free spirit of popular institutions as based upon this principle, that the political aspect of modern Europe is distinguished as compared with that of ancient Europe. In the ancient world, the idea of liberty was always allied with that of popular institutions, the idea of tyranny with that of kingly government. It

does not appear to have occurred to men in those times as possible that a greater liberty might be realized by a union of both those forms, than by the separate possession of either. The surface of Europe is parcelled out by means of its seas, mountains, and rivers, so as to become the natural home of a family of vigorous and independent states. Accordingly, within the limits of the states of modern Europe we find specimens of civil government of the most varied description, from the republican freedom of Switzerland, which may be compared with that of the ancient Arcadia, to the monarchical power of Austria and Russia, bearing too near a resemblance to that of the old Asiatic monarchies—the monarchies which taught the Greeks to account the word king as synonymous with tyrant. The interesting problem now in process of solution on the soil of the fairer portion of Europe, relates to the degree in which these different forms of polity may be advantageously modified and combined. The old ground of debate concerning the proper nature and limits of aristocracy and democracy, has been extended, so as to take in the question of monarchy or no monarchy, and the question, also, as to the much or little of power that should be conceded to sovereignty, as well as the many interesting questions which relate to our peculiar principle of representation.

As it is in this respect with regard to questions relating to political science, so is it in regard to all questions affecting the state of society,—modern Europe in these respects also has its peculiarities as compared with the ancient. Of these peculiarities we shall treat more at large in subsequent chapters. The proper value of the review with which we have now been occupied arises from

the fact, that the history of great cities is pre-eminently the history of social experiment. Our acquaintance, accordingly, with the policy which obtained in them in other lands and other times, should qualify us to judge with less chance of error in regard to the probable results of the policy acted upon in our own cities, and in our own time. If the great cities of the past have their contrasts, they have also their resemblances to the great cities of the present, and in both respects their story should be instructive.

It has been the will of Providence that the artificial causes which have contributed to the rise and fall of great cities, should not be in all instances of the same complexion. The prosperity which we see as the natural effect of an enlightened system of liberty in one direction, we may see growing up beneath the oversight of a wisely-managed despotism in another direction. But no one, it is presumed, will question that the prosperity which has resulted from the former cause must be greatly preferable to anything that can result from the latter. In the former case, it bespeaks the enlightenment of a solitary mind—in the latter, the enlightenment of a people. In this view, the civilization of Athens and Rome, in the better period of their history, contrasts forcibly with that which obtained in such cities as Thebes and Babylon. The intelligence of the latter cities was at best the intelligence of a caste. The mechanical only was assigned to the people, the intellectual was reserved to their rulers. Still, it must not be denied, that there have been occasions, when the merely physical enjoyments of the mass of the people have been as largely realized under a despotism as under any form of free

government. But, in such connexions, the same fountain sends forth sweet waters and bitter, and the bitter more often than the sweet. The despot who becomes the father of his people, becomes such in spite of the existing political system ; while the series who follow him as oppressors of their people, do so as the natural effect of that system.

It seems, then, that the maxims of arbitrary power are in a sense natural to the Asiatic character, and that the spirit of freedom possesses the same kind of affinity with the temper of the European. But while the artificial may vary in this manner with race, climate, and soil, the influence of the intellectual and the moral partakes more of uniformity. It will have been perceived, that in this review of the character of ancient cities no attempt has been made to conceal or extenuate the evils which grew up along with the civilization that obtained in them. But if there is any conclusion to be deduced with certainty from this retrospect, it is, that the degree in which any people shall become occupied with the arts of peace, is the degree in which their ignorance will be diminished, their rudeness softened, their faculties sharpened and expanded, and their means of enjoyment augmented. But another conclusion follows no less certainly—namely, that the moral culture of such a people must be made to keep pace with their general culture, if the latter is to conduce to the perpetuity of the social state in its day of trial. Nor is it less beyond reasonable doubt, that the decay and ruin which have come successively on the cities of the world, must be traced, in an eminent degree, to the insufficiency of any false religion, and to the insufficiency even of the true when grossly

corrupted, as means of sustaining a high tone of social morality, along with an advanced state of civilization.

The means of enjoyment among a people, must depend on their industry and ingenuity, as affected by external circumstances; but the power to make a good use of such means when acquired, must consist in a wise moral government; and in such cases, the principles of moral obligation do not carry a steady force along with them, except as they are strengthened by the sanctions of religion. It is from this root that all the other essentials to social prosperity must derive their nourishment and permanence; and the great mystery in connexion with the moral aspect of our world is, that religion, the comparatively pure state of which is thus essential to all permanent greatness, should have been almost everywhere, either a lie, or a grossly corrupted truth!

Our hope, then, as exposed to all the dangers which have proved so fatal through the past, must have respect to our better faith, and not only to the earnestness, but to the wisdom—the moral and philanthropic wisdom—with which we endeavour to realize its wide diffusion, as that of the momentous element which can alone operate as a preserving leaven through the great substance of modern society. There is many a subordinate element of social strength of which we shall do well to avail ourselves, and concerning which we shall have occasion to speak, but this is the great one. The period of moral danger, and consequently of all danger, in the history of nations, is not while they are labouring to become great, so much as when greatness has been realized.

CHAPTER III.

ON THE TENDENCIES IN MODERN SOCIETY TOWARDS THE FORMATION OF GREAT CITIES.

SECTION I.

ON THE EXTINCTION OF DOMESTIC SLAVERY IN EUROPE, AND ON THE SOCIAL PROGRESS INDICATED IN THAT EVENT.

THE age has come in the history of European society which has put an end to domestic slavery. On the ground of this fact the modern world may be said to take a strong moral precedence as compared with the ancient. America, indeed, and some of the colonial possessions of European kingdoms, are not wholly free from the guilt of slave-holding, but that stain has been removed from the soil of Europe. The element of social health, moreover, which has taken possession, in this form, of the heart of the civilized world, is, we trust, to extend itself, at no very distant period, through the whole system.

This change has not come at once. It has been the result of a variety of causes, operating through many centuries. The slave population of the Roman empire became the serfs of the feudal system; and as serfs, this class continued to be accounted as mere property, and were bought and sold as such. It was one of the

imperfections of the feudal system, natural to it in the circumstances of its origin, that it gave to man a power over the person of man, as consequent on the right to territorial property. The serfs were as much the property of the soil, as was anything that fed or grew upon it. But this subjection came not alone. It brought with it some compensation in the way of protection, and was, upon the whole, a state of freedom, if compared with the previous condition of the enslaved.

It must be recorded as to the honour of Christianity, even in its most corrupt state, that it was reserved to the clergy to set the example of treating this depressed class of society with considerateness and humanity, and of frequently raising them above their degraded state by public acts of manumission. Some instances of the buying and selling of such persons occur in our own history so late as the sixteenth century; but such cases were then rare, and subsequently the traces of this kind of servitude wholly disappear, not only among ourselves, but in the other states of Europe. We have seen in the preceding chapter, the extent to which slavery was imposed by the later Romans, and every one must be aware of its prevalence in Asia; nor must it be forgotten that this form of wrong attached to the most enlightened republics, in common with every form of despotism.

It is not difficult to perceive something of the feeling and principle in which this great fact, which has placed modern society on a ground in so great a degree its own, has originated. We see in it the effect of a more just estimate of man. It raises him from his place among things, and assigns him a place, however humble his

condition, with his common nature. It is a recognition of rights as belonging to the meanest. It does not necessarily convey franchise, so as to raise all men to a direct participation in the conducting of public affairs; but it is a first, and most important step, toward every form of amelioration and improvement. If we admit that man ought not to be enslaved, we do in effect allege that he ought not to be wronged. Right in one thing, becomes, in this manner, a preliminary toward right in everything. The transition is not distant, from the feeling which tells us that we should do harm to no man, to that which will tell us that we should do good to all men. All the seeds of good which are thus involved in the principle that manumits the slave, are more or less wanting where that principle is wanting—and, what is more, the place of these seeds of good is sure to be supplied, in a great degree, by the opposite seeds of evil. The want, in such case, is in respect to a clearer sense of rectitude, and a deeper feeling of humanity,—and that is a defect the influence of which will not be limited to the condition of the slave. The system which empowers a man to buy and sell his fellow-men, and which teaches him to account them as property rather than men, must necessarily tend to narrow the perceptions, and to impair the feelings, which have respect to social obligations generally. Contact with this system on the part of Europeans in these later ages, has always been found to carry much of this deteriorating influence along with it. Let men do wrong upon system, and they will soon imbibe a passion to do wrong,—and a passion to do wrong in one form, has a natural affinity with propensities to do so in other forms.

As it is thus easy to discern the nature of the feeling and principle in which this change has originated, so it is not difficult to see the point toward which it tends. It is in itself a broad recognition of the rights of humanity, and may be regarded as the starting point in the new movement of society. It has not only substituted a free peasantry in place of a peasantry of slaves; but has done much to revive and augment the power of cities, and thus to facilitate the progress of that more recognised and certain equality of rights, which has never obtained, in anything more than a rude elementary form, except by means of cities. In this great change, a capacity of improvement is supposed to belong to all, and the race of life is opened to all. It has not only given to society a new complexion, but has set before it new objects. Without encouraging the insane demand which would put an end to all social gradation among men, it has apprised the highest and the lowest that there is ground in common between them. In pointing to the narrowing of the distance which has separated such classes from each other, it has announced a more equal diffusion of wisdom and humanity as the form of progression which is to constitute the great object of society in the ages to come. This object, moreover, it assigns pre-eminently to great cities, in return for the new impulse and spirit which it has imparted to them, and the new moral glory with which it has invested them.

SECTION II.

ON THE ESTIMATE OF THE CHARACTER OF WOMEN IN
MODERN AS COMPARED WITH ANCIENT TIMES, AND ON
ITS SOCIAL INFLUENCE.

THE more humanized temper of modern society, observable in the generous innovation which has been made by the abolition of domestic slavery upon the social landmarks both of the civilized and the barbarous in all past time, is further indicated in the just estimate of the social claims of woman, as compared with the sentiments which have prevailed in regard to her in Europe, and which continue to prevail in Asia. The ancients may not have suspected the injustice, nor the pernicious consequences of their sentiments, on this point, any more than upon the question of slavery. But there is nothing in the sincerity with which men adhere to error to abate the force of the mischiefs which are natural to it. On the contrary, men do wrong only the more freely, and upon a wider scale, as the consequence of doing it under the persuasion that it is not wrong.

It is to a defective estimate of female character that we must trace the practice of polygamy, so common in the east. In that pernicious usage alone, we see a cause sufficiently potent, to prevent any nation adopting it from becoming either free or great. Polygamy converts the family circle into a caldron of passions most repugnant to concord and happiness, and nations are made up of collections of families. In such families, every new wife must become a new element of rivalry, and the children of the same father become acquainted

with the relationship which is common to them, only to become enemies on account of the relationship in which they differ. Even the conjugal relation, in such cases, has commonly a stronger tendency to cherish the malevolent than the milder affections, and the same may be said of the relations of brother and sister. The proper fruit of polygamy, throughout the domestic circle, is distrust in the place of confidence, and a disposition to cherish an ever rankling animosity in place of the tenderest attachments. Nor is this all—it is an institute which, in its general effect, first degrades women, and then allows them to become the educators and rulers of the class of men who should be as educators and rulers to all beside! Where this usage prevails, princes receive their education in the seraglio; and, in general, the effect of their early training is sufficiently observable to the end of their days.

In Greece and Rome a man was the husband of one wife, but that wife was in scarcely any sense his equal. His servants were slaves, his wife was the guardian of his children, and his home embraced little that could serve to abate the roughness of temper and manner likely to be induced by long familiarity with the cares of private occupation, or with the storms of public life. Athens, indeed, at one period, possessed accomplished women; but they were women who, in breaking through the restraints of usage, lost in virtue more than they had gained in social position. In Rome, the same course was pursued, and the same consequence followed; or if something more of importance was ceded to the weaker sex, it was that their finer and characteristic qualities might be in a great measure effaced, and that they might

be assimilated to the harder and coarser features of men, too much after the manner of the women of Sparta.

Thus in antiquity, the milder sentiments natural to woman, were rarely suffered to make their just impression on man. Domestic habits in the case of the chief man of a household, became, in consequence, too much characterized by reserve, hardness, selfishness, and absence from home. At home there were none with whom he could unbend, as there were none whom custom had allowed to become properly familiar with his thoughts and solitudes; nor was relief always attainable when sought from abroad. In that quarter, rival interests were much too common to admit of frequent expressions of confidence. Amidst the jostlings and anxieties of ordinary life, and amidst the discharge of the sterner acts of public duty, men needed much more of a softening influence than was thus afforded them. The moral feeling must always lose in freedom, tenderness, and power, when concealed or pent up, after this manner, by artificial circumstances.

In the later history of Europe, the better usage of the Gothic nations, and the benign spirit of Christianity, have concurred to produce a new feeling in regard to the comparative claims of the sexes, and have given to modern society its distinction in this respect. The chivalry of the middle age contributed to give strength to this new feeling, and, with the subsequent advances of society, the frivolities of a merely chivalrous gallantry, gave place by degrees to that earnest and confiding regard, which has moulded all our habits of courtesy, and given its impress to our gravest laws no less than to the smaller matters belonging to our familiar intercourse. If the

extinction of domestic servitude was a noble act of justice performed on the part of the free toward the enslaved, this last change may be regarded as an act of the same nature performed by one half of the species toward the other half. Both facts point toward one issue—an equalized regard to the interests and rights of humanity. They point to both sexes and to all grades, as entitled to the same protection, and they point to the path of self-improvement as to a course that should be open equally to all.

In this change, then, we see the progress of the intelligent, the moral, and the kindly, prompting men to do toward the slave and toward woman, as it must be in the nature of such qualities to prompt them to do generally, in respect to all the relations of social life. It is the tendency of these qualities to pass from woman to all the refinements so natural to woman; and to pass from the serf to the citizen, and to sympathize with the citizen, not only when he has reached a high social position, but when engaged in his humbler enterprises. In this great moral revolution, nothing has been done toward putting an end to the eternal distinction between the rich and the poor, the titled and the crowd, the more gifted and the less gifted; but much has been done toward separating between such distinctions and the abuses of them—toward rendering them not only harmless, but conducive to the public concord and happiness. To this new spirit of society, the old has not ceased to oppose itself, step by step. But the new spirit exists—it is progressive, and the power opposed to it will only minister to its wider and more steady advancement. It is manifestly the civic spirit, derived mainly from cities, and is always reacting in favour of the state of society which obtains in cities.

SECTION III.

ON THE PRINCIPLE OF THE PROTESTANT REFORMATION,
AND ON ITS RELATION TO THE PROGRESS OF SOCIETY.

BUT if Christianity has done much to foster the spirit which declares that every man should be a freeman, and that woman should be his companion, and not his slave, it has done much more, since the era of the Reformation, to strengthen all previous impulses of that nature, by calling upon men, without respect of persons, to become, in the main, their own teachers with regard to all matters of religious opinion and religious duty. This was the great blow against social selfishness, as taking the form of exclusion and monopoly. No other movement could have given such solemn prominence to the broad ground occupied by men in common, as distinguished from the narrow grounds on which they differ from each other. It brought home the doctrine of human responsibility to every man's conscience and bosom, and with a force altogether new.

It taught a people, who seemed to have nothing to do in religion, except to be observant of its forms, to feel as though they had everything to do in it, if their observance of forms was to be found of the slightest value. Men who had been taught to lean entirely on the priesthood of others, were admonished, that as they hoped to be saved, it would behove them to become their own priests. In this manner, it set forth a new doctrine in respect to human right and human duty, based on new views in regard to human capability. It raised man from a condition of mere passiveness in the hands of

the accredited ministers of religion, and required him to act with the intelligence and seriousness proper to a being conscious of his personal accountableness to God.

No lingering attachment to the old forms of authority on the part of the Reformers themselves, could prevent the impulse which they had brought upon society from taking this direction, or from proceeding to this extent. Their mission was, in effect, a proclamation of liberty to the captive, and of the opening of the prison to them that were bound,—or, as the utterance of a warning voice, saying, the night is far spent, the day is at hand, be sober, be vigilant. For this call was not more a call to liberty than to labour. Its aim was not merely a restoration of human rights, but the restoration of a spirit in man that should be worthy of them.

It was no mean thing that men should learn to regard themselves as competent to pursue the course which had been thus marked out for them in respect to religion, inasmuch as it would prepare them to look with a new intelligence on many other subjects, which, in common with religion, had been long accounted as greatly above their comprehension. If men, for example, were to conduct themselves after this manner with regard to religion, was it not reasonable that they should learn to conduct themselves in the same manner with regard to the questions of civil government? If the church could err—and err so fatally—might not the state also err, and no less fatally, and could it be improper that the right to judge concerning the more sacred should be extended to the less? Religion and government are the great questions of society, and the principle which conveys a right to

take cognizance of these, conveys a right to take cognizance of everything else. It is the fact that the principle of the Reformation carried with it these seeds of general improvement, that has given to it so much importance in the view of all minds interested in the progress of man and society. It was a call to wakefulness on one great subject, and a call made with so much success, that it could not fail of inducing a habit of wakefulness in respect to many other subjects. Sagacious men perceived that affairs tended to this issue, some regarding it with dismay, others with hope, and neither were disappointed.

The fearing class were bold in their predictions with regard to the ruin that must come. Nor is it to be supposed, that the minds of men could pass through such a transition without being affected by circumstances so novel, so as to call forth some of the infirmities of human nature in new forms. In breaking away from the odious assumptions of a false authority, it was to be feared that many would fail to discern the just claims of the true. In some cases, the modest self-reliance which religion enjoins, would be confounded with the spirit of presumption which it condemns. The war of argument, also, soon brought on the war of the sword. School became divided against school, and, as the next step, nation became divided against nation.

But to judge wisely concerning any such change, we must look upon it broadly, and as a whole. Despotism has its seasons of repose, but it is not a repose with which wise men will be enamoured. The errors attendant on the Reformation may have been many, but they were neither so many, nor of a kind so much to be deplored, as were those which they served to supersede. It

was, we admit, another consequence of that change, that the wars of Europe, during more than a century from that time, were, for the most part, wars of religion. But when we look to the wars which preceded that interval, and to those which followed upon it, we see little reason to doubt that, had the pretexts or incentives of religion been wanting, their place would have been readily supplied by others not less potent or mischievous. But while the place of the evils in the train of the Reformation would no doubt have been supplied by others of greater magnitude, the good which resulted from the mental and spiritual revolution of the sixteenth century, was such as could not have been realized, within the same space of time, from any other cause.

The effect of this new spirit upon commerce, and upon the kind of civilization which has its centre in great cities, has been very conspicuous. Just before the commencement of the Reformation, the commercial power of Europe was in the hands of the Portuguese. During the progress of that struggle, Spain became the seat of commercial ascendancy. But no sooner do we see Protestantism acquire stability and power in Europe, than we see the civic industry, the manufacturing skill, the commercial enterprise, the colonial greatness, and the naval power of Europe go over, almost entirely, to the side of the professors of the new faith, and with that class of religionists have these things continued, in the main, to our own time.

It was the liberating power of Protestantism which enabled the United Provinces to assert their independence in the face of the most deadly hostility on the part of Spain and her allies; and which enabled the same people

to place an effectual check on the ambition of Louis XIV., even while the half of Europe was at his bidding. In the history of those memorable wars "the little one became as a thousand, and the small one as a strong nation." Every local disadvantage was surmounted, and the paucity of numbers was everywhere supplied by the promptitude and bravery of an enlightened and free people.

Portugal, Spain, and Italy, have continued their adhesion to the old faith, and to this day they are the victims of the old decrepitude. Nations upon the threshold of those countries have been making every sort of progress, with unprecedented rapidity, during the last three centuries, and during that period those kingdoms have not been merely stationary, but in most respects retrograding. The proud power of Spain has passed away, and the dreams of regenerating Portugal and Italy, in what have they ended? It is true, Germany and France have become great without becoming strictly Protestant. But the Catholicism of Germany has always been greatly modified by the presence and ascendancy of the antagonist faith; and the spirit and institutions of France derive much of their character from an indifference with respect both to the old faith of Europe and to the new.

We do not hesitate, therefore, to allege, that the weakness of the social system in Europe is on the side of Catholicism, and that its strength is on the side of Protestantism.

In the New World, the same difference is seen to be in a striking degree attendant on these different forms of religion. In that quarter, the beautiful and fertile landscapes in the south fell to the lot of the Catholic. The bleak

and barren regions of the north were assigned to the Protestant. But no man can need be told that the people for whom nature seemed in this case to have done nothing, have immeasurably surpassed the people for whom nature appeared to have done everything. In the one connexion you see men concerned to transplant everything feeble and time-worn from the institutions of Europe. In the other you see a social system constructed from whatever is most youthful and promising in the present condition of the civilized world. With the one, the pervading feeling seems to be reverence for the past. With the other, the great stimulant is hope in relation to the future. Hence, in the one case, the tendency is toward submission, and stationariness; in the other, toward liberty, and progression. If we descend from continents to islands, and from islands to provinces, this distinction is still observable. Every man must have felt the force of this contrast, who has passed from the Protestant to the Catholic districts in Ireland, or in Switzerland.

My object in the mention of these facts is to shew, that the strength of Protestantism is a strength on the side of industry, of human improvement, and of the civilization which leads to the formation of great cities. Such cities may be regarded with misgiving. The political, the moral, the religious in them, may not be always to our taste. But they exist as the result of causes which are manifestly the work of a divine hand. We have our Babylons from the same will of providence that has given to us our Bibles. Our purer Christianity and our great cities are results from the same cause. The genius of Protestantism is the genius of all pacific and manly

enterprise. It is in its nature that it should give to the civic spirit this ascendancy over the military. So long, also, as it exists, it must exist as a potent agency in favour of the higher culture of cities, as compared with the lower culture of provinces. It is itself from God, and this living impulse in favour of all social elevation which is inseparable from it, is also from him. The present course of things, accordingly, is not to be thrust back or impeded. Its path is fixed—fixed by him who hath appointed the day-spring to know its place, and the outgoings of the morning to rejoice !

SECTION IV.

ON THE PRINTING-PRESS, AND ON ITS PLACE AMONG THE MEANS OF SOCIAL IMPROVEMENT.

CONTEMPORANEOUS with the Reformation was the discovery of printing. The bricks used in the erections of ancient Babylon present specimens of a kind of printing. The only difference was, that the subjects of Nebuchadnezzar printed with hollow types, the subjects of Charles V. with types which projected. Thus the slightest exercise of thought, beyond the point then attained, might have sufficed to place the most momentous invention in the history of modern art among the discoveries of the ancients, and have given the printing-press a place by the side of the far-famed looms of Babylon. But great men are the creation of their times. They come as providence has its uses to

make of them. Great discoveries obey the same law. When brought to light it becomes the wonder of every man that they should have been matters of secrecy so long. It is thus with the printing-press, and it has been thus equally with the discovery of the pendulum, and of the needle, and with the voyage which opened to Europe the wonders of the New World.

Printing was to have its place among the facts of modern art, and among the means which should be most conspicuous in moulding the character of modern society. Along with the great change which called upon men to read and judge for themselves, came the great discovery which made it possible that they should do as was enjoined. The age in which religious principle declared the Bible to be every man's book, was the age in which natural invention placed it within every man's reach. Old prescription had lost much of its power. All things were to be examined anew: and the printing-press furnished, almost as by a miracle, the means of prosecuting that examination. The season had arrived in which a great work should be done, and in order to the doing of it, a process of art, exceedingly simple in itself, but which had been reserved as one of the secrets of providence for nearly six thousand years, is made to have its place among the treasures of human knowledge.

The absence of alphabetic writing in Egypt, except in a very obscure form, has been fatal to the knowledge of its earlier history. Indisposition to communicate anything literary to the people in ancient Asia, has led to a similar result. Even in Athens and Rome, the absence of printing was sufficient to render literary tastes the distinction of a class, rather than the acquisition of a

people. Without the printing-press, the only existence of books must be in the shape of costly manuscripts. The possession of a library, accordingly, was restricted to the rich, and the classes below them were almost without a stimulus even to learn to read. In classical antiquity, mental culture, even in the case of the educated, followed much more from what men heard, than from what they read. Classical authors, in consequence, wrote to the few, and not to the many. Hence, in great part, the patient elaboration by which their works are characterized. In general, the men who purchased books were the men who could best judge of them. Authors who commended themselves to a lower level of discernment, did so at the hazard of not finding either purchasers or readers. It should be observed, therefore, that in those times, the republics in letters, in common with the republics in politics, were such in name much more than in reality,—the number of the privileged who shared in the influence of literature directly and powerfully, being very small, if compared with the number of the commonalty who were affected by it only indirectly and feebly.

It is admitted that this disparity must exist more or less everywhere. The learned will be a class, smatterers will be a class, and the wholly ignorant will be a class. But these classes may undergo great change in their relative numbers, and in their relative character. Learned men may be less rare, smatterers may be less superficial, and the wholly ignorant may be much fewer. Progress of this kind may be impeded, by means of usage or law designed to act as a check upon it; or it may be accelerated by means adapted to that end. But in this respect classical antiquity was a great improve-

ment upon Asiatic antiquity, and modern society is a still greater improvement upon the ancient, even in its best form.

The appeal made by the reformers of the sixteenth century was to humanity at large, and their aim was to elevate man as such, irrespective of all artificial distinction. Religion prompted to this generous and novel course; and the aid of the printing-press on the side of this object, was such as seemed to proclaim it a gift from heaven. Its advocates were cheered in their labour and peril—not in the vain hope that ignorance was about to cease, but in the rational confidence that knowledge was about to increase, and that men would find in the increase of knowledge an increase of safety and happiness. Nor was this expectation vain. Since that age, knowledge of every kind has been descending, slowly but constantly, toward the great mass of society. Its direct influence covers a much wider space than among the most literary people in any preceding time, and its indirect influence is everywhere. Millions are instructed in letters in the present age as the same class has never been instructed before; and millions who have received little direct instruction of that nature, benefit by its indirect influence, as the consequence of its greater prevalence, in a manner no less unprecedented.

In the esteem of the sincere Protestant, the controversy of the Reformation was the interest of every man—his interest civil and religious. Tracts and volumes relating to it were constantly issuing from the press; and multiplied as they were, they were not too numerous to be read. When the excitement which had respect to religion began to subside, it was natural that the habit

of reading, which had been thus diffused, should extend itself to other matters. It so happened, and the clerical faculty of being able to read and write became the acquirement of multitudes among the people.

But during no quarter of a century in the previous history of nations, has the number of persons who may be accounted possessors and readers of books been so greatly increased as within the last five-and-twenty years. The formation of the Useful Knowledge Society constituted an era in the history of popular literature and intelligence. It came into existence in consequence of the improved state of information among the body of the people in our towns and cities. With this large class the disposition to read was greatly in advance of the means of purchasing books at the usual cost. The object of the society adverted to, accordingly, was to cheapen the elements of literature and of useful information, as nearly as possible to the condition of the poorest. Should that society cease to exist to-morrow, it has already performed a service in relation to society at large which nothing can efface. The immediate good which it has accomplished is great, but its great impression upon our age consists in the wide-spread rivalry which it has been found to provoke. Parties who would have crushed it, by casting upon it every kind of reproach, have been constrained to become its imitators : and while these have been constrained to cater for the popular taste as matter of hard necessity, multitudes beside have entered into this kind of labour in the spirit of willing coadjutors.

It has thus become a part of our social state, that knowledge on all subjects should be published in forms

rendering it accessible to the poor in common with the rich, and to the less educated in common with the more educated. Large sales and small profits, has, in consequence, become a maxim with authors, hardly less than with tradesmen. In place of each man looking to the few, as among the ancients, all men are now looking to the many. The many can read, the many can buy, and the proudest, accordingly, do not scruple to address themselves, by their economy in publication, to this new object of worship. The reluctant patronage of the learned and the great, both in ancient and modern time, has given place to the more willing, direct, and wholesome patronage of the public.

In one respect this change may seem to have detracted much from the dignity of authorship. The stately folio has long since disappeared, and even the moderate quarto has been obliged to give place to less aristocratic forms of type and paper. To such an extent has this process of humiliation been carried in the case of our old standard authors, that their best works may be purchased almost for shillings in the place of pounds. Nor is this change peculiar to England. It is common to Europe, to North America, and to all the parts of the globe on which the institutions of the free nations of Europe have obtained a footing.

Now, whatever, in some respects, may be the influence of this new course of things upon the older literature of our own country, or upon that of future time, we cannot fail to perceive in it the strong tendency of human affairs towards a more equalized state of intelligence. Printing is everywhere, and is everywhere an agency contributing to bring the extremes of society into nearer

connexion. It is everywhere diffusing incentives to greater sameness of thought, feeling, and action. In sending the means of instruction to the humblest, it is doing much to render it more common even in that class : and by disposing men to occupy themselves with the arts of peace, the mischief which it prevents, and the good which it confers, are incalculable.

But in all these modes we see the press operating as one of the most powerful causes in favour of the civilization which tends to the formation of great cities. Its natural effect is to give dominion to intelligence, and not to mere force. Its momentum is a power on the side of industry, ingenuity, and commerce, and as such on the side of civic greatness. It may raise up an aristocracy of capitalists to compete with an aristocracy of landholders, but its much stronger tendency is to give ascendancy, in effect if not in form, to the natural aristocracy of intelligence and virtue. It is not necessarily opposed to the two former elements of social power, but it holds its special alliance with the latter. Superstition and feudalism have alike paled before it, and while it has done much to put down those forms of oppression on the one hand, it has done much to establish the freedom, and consolidate the power, of man as a citizen upon the other. It is a foe which may be chained in one region, but which will be sure to avenge itself by the fuller exercise of its power in another. Its destruction is no more possible than the annihilation of the entire social system of the civilized world, and it must cease to exist before it can cease to be the agent it has been. Its evils, where it has full licence, are many, but all are trivial compared with its good.

SECTION V.

ON THE CONJOINT INFLUENCE OF THE PRECEDING CAUSES
IN RESPECT TO THE AGE OF GREAT CITIES.

BE it distinctly remembered, then, at this point, that all the facts on which we have now touched, were so many new inducements to extend the benefits of education. With the extinction of slavery came an extension of franchise, and with it the policy which must dispose every sober community to connect the exercise of franchise with some degree of intelligence. With regard to the higher estimate of the character of woman; the enlarged views of human nature inseparable from the doctrines of the Reformation; and the facilities afforded both to sound learning and popular instruction by the invention of printing—the effect of all these novelties as regards education, was soon everywhere manifest. In the days of Roger Ascham, women were taught to give at least a portion of their time to much graver studies than those of the distaff and the toilet. From the age of Edward VI., and of Elizabeth, the advantages of a technical education were extended more equally to both sexes, and considerable provision was made with a view to extend them more generally and permanently to the people. The time had come in which all persons might be possessed of books, and in which all persons were in consequence brought under a strong inducement to learn to read, and to make some progress in letters. Through the long interval from that age to our own, the learned class has been constantly increasing in numbers; the

partially-learned have increased in a much greater proportion ; and the elements of knowledge now find their way over so wide a surface as to affect in a measure even the lowest. These various influences, constituting as they do a new social power among men, must produce their effect. If not made to be potent in giving to society a good education, they cannot fail in giving to it a bad one.

All men seem to be more or less alive to this fact. By some it is regarded as the felicity, by others as the doubtful necessity of the times. But whether moved by hope or fear, the course of all parties in this respect is the same. Whatever else may be uncertain, it would seem to be the will of providence that the popular mind in Europe should be brought under a degree of culture that will be new in its history, and this, as we must suppose, in order to purposes which will be also new in the history of nations. The kingdoms which have been, in this respect, are not the kingdoms which shall be ; and it is with communities as with men, difference in character will bring with it a difference in conduct.

All the facts to which allusion has now been made, are of a nature to dispose men to cultivate the arts of peace ; and by giving a prevalence and power to commerce, their tendency is to give greatness and permanence to cities. Commercial greatness is the only powerful state of things that can possibly come into the place of military greatness. There is the genius of commerce and the genius of the sword, and all is mediocrity beside. The scattered tillers of the ground, if left to themselves, must always resemble the vegetation of the wild

heath, which the eye regards not, and of which the future preserves no memorial. Such is the necessary lot of isolated man, especially when doomed to a narrow round of manual occupation. If men are to become strong, physically or mentally, it must be by association—by the association of war, or by those of cities. It is, happily, towards strength in the latter form that affairs are now tending through the civilized world.

Subsequent to the treaty of Westphalia, in 1648, the wars of Europe ceased to be influenced mainly by considerations of religion. The division between Catholics and Protestants became less a ground of hostility. In the history of diplomacy, the ecclesiastical differences of nations became everywhere subordinate to the civil. The wars which arose after that time had respect almost exclusively to boundaries, successions, and questions relating to commerce. As reasons of religion gave place, by degrees, to reasons of state, so among reasons of state, those which had respect to naval power, and commercial relations, became the most weighty. The position assumed by the United Provinces, and subsequently by Great Britain, contributed much toward giving this direction to affairs. In the steady progress of this commercial spirit, habit, and power, in Europe, we have before us one of the great facts of modern history.

The path of this new and better policy has been crossed by hot wars during three remarkable periods—the age of the Reformation, that of Louis XIV., and that of Napoleon. The wars belonging to the first of these periods owed their origin, as we have seen, to some of the gravest motives that can influence human conduct: those of the age of Louis XIV. were the effect

of a boundless ambition and vanity in the breast of one man : and those of the French Revolution, after being waged for a time in the cause of constitutional liberty and national independence, degenerated into a protracted struggle to diffuse and uphold an odious military despotism. Even during those adverse seasons the commercial spirit in Europe continued to acquire strength, and since the cessations of those conflicts have allowed that spirit to put forth more and more of its proper force, much greater advances have been made. How limited were the colonial territories of antiquity compared with those of modern nations ? And what was their naval power compared with that which has been wielded by Spain, Holland, and Great Britain ?

SECTION VI.

ON THE QUESTION—WILL MODERN CIVILIZATION BE PERPETUATED ?

IF it be inquired—on what ground do you expect that this course of things will continue, not only continue but augment, so as to be less liable to disturbance in the future than in the past ? My answer is, that this may be expected in part from the greater influence of religion, and in part from the natural operation of an enlightened self-interest.

Whatever may be the feebleness of the state to which religion is reduced among some of the nations of the continent, its power as pervading Great Britain and the United States, and as reaching thus to the great field of

the European colonies, will not be deemed inconsiderable. Over all Europe, indeed, it is not so much the want of a religious spirit that we have to deplore, as the want of that spirit subject to an enlightened guidance. Nearly all lands have, at this moment, their heated controversies, and the most impassioned of those controversies have respect to religion. Among ourselves and among the Anglo-Americans, with whom the religious sentiment would seem to be more powerful than elsewhere, it is a sentiment in alliance with the same blood, with the same language, and with similar institutions; and strengthened as it is by these elements of unity, it is a power everywhere in favour of a strife which looks not to the sword, but to commercial prosperity and social advancement.

It is admitted, however, that bearing in mind how very partially the old states in Europe are influenced by such feelings, and how readily men will bend even their religion to the course of their worldly interests, it would not be easy to persuade ourselves that any peace establishment in this quarter of the globe would be really of long continuance, or that this commercial spirit would be found to retain and augment its power, were it not, in a good degree manifest, that mankind have now much more reason than in past time to regard their own interest as intimately connected with this altered policy. Motives arising from a feeling of self-interest, involve, within certain limits, legitimate principles of action. They constitute an important part of the means which Providence has always employed in the accomplishment of its purposes. When evil in themselves, they may lead to good, and the good in them is often greater than

the evil. It is not even the province of religion wholly to exclude the selfish, but rather to place it under a wise and beneficent control.

Certain it is that, during the last quarter of a century, the commercial spirit has been everywhere supplanting the warlike. Men seem to have learnt, at least in some degree, that it is possible to find a better employment than that of bringing the greatest available skill to the business of destroying each other. It is beginning to be suspected, that the sword, after all, may not be the only species of argument to which men may with dignity betake themselves with a view to the adjustment of disputes. Some progress has certainly been made toward the conclusion, that it may be both wise and humane to do what we can in order to prolong life, in place of shortening it ; and to increase the means of human enjoyment, in place of diminishing them. Judging from these appearances, we should say, that the producer is on his way to supersede the destroyer ; and that the men of peace are about to become greater in their generation than the men of war. In this respect, we trust, they that were last are about to become first, and they that were first are about to become last.

Yes—cities, and their resources, must soon become, in a greater degree than ever, the acknowledged wealth and power of nations. Philosophers are beginning to see this ; cabinets are obliged to act upon it ; and monarchs cannot conceal from themselves that it will be to their interest to conform to this new current in human affairs. Thus the feudal temper, which rested its dominion upon the sword, is giving place to the spirit of a civilization which aims at dominion by means of intelligence, in-

dustry, order, law, and liberty. It will not be upon the sovereign and his nobles, or upon the chief and his vassals, that the states of Europe in the future will depend for the means of safety. As nations come to abound in great cities, they learn to become their own defenders, and their own rulers.

In forwarding these great moral results, science is lending her influence in many powerful forms. The new and speedy communication which will soon be completed between all great cities in every nation of Europe, will necessarily tend to swell the larger towns into still greater magnitude, and to diminish the weight of many smaller places, as well as of the rural population generally in social affairs. Everywhere we trace this disposition to converge upon great points. It avails nothing to complain of this tendency as novel, inconsiderate, hazardous. The pressure toward such an issue is irresistible, nor do we see the slightest prospect of its ceasing to be so.

It has often been the lot of great nations to fall by the hand of invaders who have broken in upon them from the less cultivated regions of the earth. Such has been the course of things in Southern Asia; and the fall of the Roman Empire is sufficient to shew that Europe has not always been secure against calamity in that form. But we may, perhaps, venture to say, that revolutions brought about by such means, are not among the evils which the existing nations of Europe have to apprehend. During many ages, the expanding energies of civilised man have served to shut up the barbarian forces of the world into spaces more and more narrow. Hence the danger of great states in the future will be from within

more than from without. In any such struggle as that to which we now allude, modern science, as possessed by the many, would be an impassable barrier to modern barbarism as confined to the few. The great demand made upon the wisdom, upon the virtue,—ay, and upon the courage, too, of modern nations, will be to adjust, in the best manner, the relative claims of the several classes making up their own respective communities. The one thing needful in their history will be a good domestic policy. In the absence of that good, their greatest foes will be those of their own household.

This increase in the magnitude and power of cities, which carries the important consequence just adverted to along with it, is nowhere more conspicuous than in Great Britain. In France, during a long period, all political power had its centre and home in Paris. The capital made and unmade, set up one and put down another—did according to its pleasure, the provinces being for the most part wholly passive. But this state of things did not obtain to the same degree in England, especially after the accession of the house of Stuart. The national strength was manifestly a more diffused and independent strength, pervading in a great degree all the towns and cities of the land. Since that time, this fact in our social progress has become more and more prominent. Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, all may be said to have been created since that day. Our country has become emphatically a land of great cities. Our metropolis has become such as the world has not seen. Our leading towns in the provinces equal the capitals of ordinary kingdoms. Whatever, therefore, of good or evil may pertain to the character of modern

civilization, must pertain in an eminent degree to Great Britain, so that if any nation is to be lost or saved by the character of its great cities, our own is that nation.

In adverting to these various social tendencies, as being of a nature, when taken together, to warrant some general prognostications concerning the future, we are not insensible to the danger of venturing upon anything like the language of prophecy in regard to such questions. Even the most sagacious men have sometimes indulged in such predictions, only to betray, to the men who have come after them, the infirmities of judgment, which, upon such topics, may belong to the wisest. The crisis foretold may have come, and have come fraught with much of the predicted good or evil. But it has not come alone. The effect of such things as were foreseen, has been neutralized by the influence of things which were not, and, perhaps, could not be foreseen. One class of novel agencies, may have called forth another no less novel; and thus, in a manner which no foresight could have anticipated, the stream of one age may have been turned wholly aside by the cross currents of another. The past, as we have elsewhere observed, may have its semblance; it never has its exact likeness in the present. In all reasoning on subjects of this nature this fact must be borne in mind. Men are so affected by circumstances, and circumstances are so little in one stay, that an attempt to speak with precision concerning the effect of the new combinations of to-day, upon those which may rise up to-morrow, must necessarily be attended by a great liableness to error.

Who, for example, could have foreseen, that the Spanish people of a thousand years ago, shut up as they

then were, a bleeding remnant amidst the barren mountains of Asturias, would have proved powerful enough to recover, step by step, through a war of eight centuries, the whole of that fine country which had been wrested from them by the Moslem invader in the short space of three years? Who, again, that should have compared the national spirit, and the general promise of liberty and greatness in Spain, during the fourteenth and fifteenth centuries, with those of England during the same period, could for a moment have suspected the difference of the course which was then awaiting the two countries?

Look, again, to the Protestant Reformation, you see it in little more than the space of one generation take possession of the half of Europe, and who could have reckoned that instead of continuing to diffuse its light, and liberty, and energy, it would become stationary, or even lose ground rather than advance, during the next two hundred years.

While the ancient Greeks were employed in working out their noble problems of policy and freedom, how far were they from suspecting that obscure states might soon arise in Macedonia and Italy which would prove powerful enough to reduce their beloved Greece to a condition of servility and wretchedness,—and to a state of abjectness which would continue unrelieved through all the religious and political revolutions of the next two thousand years?

And what imagination familiar with the wonders of ancient Rome when in the zenith of its splendour, could have floated on into the region of the probable or possible, so far as in any way to have anticipated the victories

of the barbarians ; the long night of the middle age ; the rise and history of the Moslem power in the East ; or the rise and history of the papal hierarchy in the West ?

In these events, and in many beside, providence appears as though putting mockery on all the methods of conjecture familiar to human forethought, and as especially intent to enforce upon men the lessons of modesty, humility, and dependence. The effects of the discovery of gunpowder, of the load-stone, and of the printing-press, are known to us from experience, and not from any shrewd forecastings of men in respect to their probable history. It will be so with the steam-engine, and with the many discoveries reserved to the future, each of which will appear in its season. It has been the pleasure of the Almighty that men should have stumbled, as it were, upon some of their most important inventions ; and the results thus obtained have often been a long time in our possession before the uses to which they might be applied have been fully perceived.

But admitting that history abounds in facts holding out this kind of caution to all minds disposed to indulge in confident speculations with regard to the future, there are, as we think, means of stability inwrought with modern society, which did not belong to the ancient, and such as enable us to reason with a degree of certainty peculiar to ourselves, from the times that are, to the times which are to follow. It is not to be concluded, because there is much foolish reasoning on subjects of this nature, that there is no reasoning on such subjects which is not foolish. We must not suppose that nothing is to be known concerning the future, because some men affect to know everything concerning it.

The relations of things in this respect carry with them a strong measure of certainty, not that we should take upon us the airs of the prophet, but that there should be encouragement to forethought, hopefulness, and effort.

We may say with certainty, for example, in regard to all the more important of our acquisitions, not only that they are gains, but that they are gains which society will never lose. This is the case with all the natural discoveries just enumerated. They can never cease to exist; they can never cease to produce their general effect upon society. Such is the space covered by modern civilization, and such are the novel facilities serving to give it perpetuity and increase in every quarter of the globe, that the fall of a nation, of an empire, or even of a continent, could not endanger its existence, or its diffusive power.

The Anglo-American people are spreading themselves rapidly from the pole to the equator, and from the Atlantic in the eastward to the Pacific in the westward. During a period dating earlier than the commencement of the great American war, and reaching to our own time, the people of those regions have doubled in every twenty-two years. Many circumstances adverse to such increase arose during that interval, but they had no power to impede its course; nor is it probable that it will suffer impediment until the population from the Hudson to the Floridas shall be found to equal, or very nearly to equal, the whole population of Europe.

From that large and hopeful portion of the earth, the mind naturally passes to the European settlements in the West Indies, in Africa, in the East, and above all,

to that new land of promise—the Europe probably of the other hemisphere in the ages to come—South Australia.

It is plain from these facts, that modern civilization—and that civilization connected in an eminent degree with the blood, and language, and institutions of Great Britain—will have no necessary dependence in the coming time upon the fate of Britain, or even of Europe. The great relations of the human family are now such, and must always continue to be such, that whatever is known in the old world, will find its home in the new. Nor can any ingredient of knowledge have its place in one hemisphere, without becoming the property of the other. It is not too much, therefore, to affirm, that the governor of the world has placed it in circumstances which give to it the best security against the return of barbarism,—the return of a second middle age.

But it may be said, that admitting it as certain that civilization will not fail to survive on a large scale somewhere, society in Europe may become subject to many and melancholy changes. This is not denied. The great nations of Europe may cease to be great. Power may pass from the greater to the less. The land may continue, but the people may degenerate, and the high civilization of one country may have little influence on the low civilization of another, though the separation between them may seem to be nothing more than the course of a river, or a chain of mountains. We see enough of the possible in this form in the later history of Greece and Italy. But our great danger in this respect, if we suppose it to exist, must consist in the degree of our exposure to barbarian conquest, or to military despotism.

In the former case, our civilization would be prostrated by the hand of violence, in the latter it would droop and perish under other influences. But concerning both these forms of calamity, we may say, that if they have their place among the possible of the future, they certainly do not belong to the probable.

With regard to barbarian invasion, our only fear must have respect to Russia. But there are no people in Europe so distinct from the rest, in race, character, and institutions, as the people of Russia; and there is no power, accordingly, against which the states of Europe generally might be so readily expected to make common cause as against Russia, should her hordes begin to descend upon us in the character of aggressors. Even Russia, however, is rapidly ceasing to have her place among the barbarous. She has at present ample space for the increase of her children, and can know nothing of inconvenience in that form during many ages to come. In the meantime it is much more probable that Russia will be subdued by the arts of the south, than that the south will be subdued by the arms of Russia. In addition to which, the affinities of Russia are much more likely to give an eastward than a westward or southward direction to her forces. Should it be otherwise, the comparative numbers of the civilized and the barbarous, and the existing apparatus of civilized warfare, would seem to have separated for ever between barbarism and conquest on the soil of Europe. It is our happiness to know that no state may now become ascendant as opposed to civilized man, without being itself in a good degree civilized.

Concerning our danger in the shape of military des-

potism—a despotism similar to that of the Roman empire, the geography of Europe happily presents the most formidable obstacles in the way of the man or the power that should become intent on such an object. The diversified apportionments into which the hand of providence has broken up the surface of Europe, by means of its seas, and rivers, and mountains, bespeak it as destined to be the dwelling-place of a number of separate and independent states. Its diversities in regard to mineral treasure, soil, and climate, point to the same beneficent design. Nothing is likely to constitute the people of these various languages, institutes, and characters, so far one, as to cause them to partake simultaneously and alike in any strong tendency, either toward good or toward evil. It is true, this isolation may not seem to promise well in regard to the unity necessary in order to meet the pressure of a common enemy. But it is better to find a separate life pervading each of the parts, than death pervading the whole. In general, it is from its separateness and independence that each state derives that development and power which ensure the intelligence that will lead to combination whenever it is needed, and the capacity which must render such combination irresistible.

In the history of modern Europe, several memorable attempts have been made toward setting up a universal monarchy. Charlemagne and Charles V., Louis XIV. and Napoleon, all laboured toward that object. But each was impeded at every step; each failed in the purpose of his ambition; and we look back upon the fabrics reared by their hands, as on some vain thing which grew up in a night and withered in a night. The known and the

civilized in Europe are no longer confined to the territories southward of the Alps and the Pyrenees. Dikes and barriers in the way of a universal monarchy have multiplied everywhere, as the surface of Europe has become better known and better peopled. The idea of such a monarchy, stretched over all Europe, is unnatural. Man, and the land about him, seem to rise up alike against it. Our civilization is strongly opposed to it, and this repugnance is the effect of causes which have been in operation much too widely, and much too long, to be enfeebled in their influence very speedily.

On the whole, the momentum which is now in action on the side of a progressive course of things, is much stronger than anything that can be brought against it during a long time to come. The great tendency of modern society is toward the formation of great cities; and in addition to the conclusions to this effect which we deduce from such facts as have been dwelt upon in this chapter, the Christian can appeal to the predictions of Holy Writ, which speak of the ultimate prevalence of all the arts of peace, in alliance with the knowledge, feeling, and happiness of true religion—"In his days shall the righteous flourish, and they of the city like grass of the earth."

CHAPTER IV.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO SCIENCE, ART, AND LITERATURE.

SECTION I.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO THE DESIGNS OF PROVIDENCE.

IT is a poet of our own who has said—"God made the country; man made the town." In this saying there is a portion of truth, but it does not contain the whole truth. As commonly understood, its effect is to substitute error in the place of truth.

Even the country, in the greater part, is no longer seen as it would appear if wholly devoid of the agency of man. In the absence of what man has done upon it, the surface of the earth must have remained barren, or have degenerated into a monstrous wilderness. No visible hand beside could have prevented it from becoming the home of every rank production, and of every unclean thing.

Nor should it be forgotten, that it was as much a part of the purpose of the Creator with regard to man, that he should build towns, as that he should till the land. If the history of cities, and of their influence on their respective territories, be deducted from the history of humanity, the narrative remaining would be, as we sus-

pect, of no very attractive description. In such case, the kind of picture which human society must everywhere have presented, would be such as we see in the condition, from the earliest time, of the wandering hordes of Mongolians and Tartars, spread over the vast flats of central Asia. In those regions, scarcely anything has been "made" by man. But this most happy circumstance, as it seems to be accounted—this total absence of anything reminding you of human skill and industry, has never been found to realize our poetic ideas of pastoral beauty and innocence. It has called forth enough of the squalid and the ferocious, but little of the refined, the powerful, or the generous.

Thus the manifest tendency of the half-truth contained in the saying adverted to, is not to convey a true impression so much as a false one—and how large a portion of the error in the world may be traced in this manner, to partial announcements of truth! If this saying has any meaning, it must mean, that man in the city, is in a less favourable condition for the development of his nature, than man in the field; that in prosecuting the higher arts which flourish in cities, he is not so much in his place as in attending to the more limited arts which relate to pasturage and cattle. But where is the man of sense that would not as soon think of reasoning to the first quadruped he should meet upon the village road, as to the head that could really mean to insinuate such a notion?

If anything be certain, it would seem to be certain, that man is constituted to realize his destiny from his association with man, more than from any contact with places. The great agency in calling forth his

capabilities, whether for good or for evil, is that of his fellows. The picturesque, accordingly, may be with the country, but the intellectual, speaking generally, must be with the town. Agriculture may possess its science, and the farmer, as well as the landowner, may not be devoid of intelligence; but in such connexions, science and intelligence, in common with the nourishment of the soil, must be derived, in the main, from the studies prosecuted in cities, and from the wealth realized in the traffic of cities. If pasturage is followed by tillage, and if tillage is made to partake of the nature of a study and a science, these signs of improvement are peculiar to lands in which cities make their appearance, and they become progressive only as cities become opulent and powerful. In this sense we might venture to change the language of our poet a little, and say, "Man makes the country, where art makes the town." In so saying we should make a much nearer approach toward the truth.

When the Almighty placed the Hebrew tribes in possession of the cities of Canaan, he recognised man as a citizen, as an improvement upon man as a wanderer. The progenitors of those tribes were plain men, "dwelling in tents," which they removed from place to place, as convenience and pasturage invited. But the descendants of the men who were thus without any settled dwelling-place, were to have their acres portioned out to them as the boundary of their habitation, and their fenced cities as a home. In the forms of their religious worship, a similar change is observable. The simple services of the patriarchal times give place to the complexity, costliness, and splendour of the Jewish

ritual. Thus the arts of civilized life, in the highest degree of refinement to which they had then attained, were taken up, in virtue of a mandate from heaven, and were applied as an appropriate adornment of divine worship. This was done by Moses, and much more conspicuously by Solomon. By that monarch the most skilful workmen were obtained from the most famous cities; and in bestowing so much enrichment on all parts of the temple, and in furnishing it everywhere in the highest style of oriental magnificence, he merely executed a purpose which was known to have been approved by the Divine mind. In this fact, we see the labours of science, and the refinements of taste, which owe their origin and progress so manifestly to the association of men in cities, not only as having their place in the approved framework of Providence, but as deemed worthy of a close alliance with the sanctities of religion.

It is not necessary in this place that we should attempt to determine how far it might be expedient or otherwise to introduce such embellishment in connexion with religious worship in these later times. It will be sufficient to observe, that had there been anything in those arts, considered in themselves, inconsistent with the great purposes of Providence and religion, they would certainly not have been taken up in the manner adverted to, at any time, or in any circumstances. The allusion now made to them is for one object only,—viz., to show that the condition of society in cities, and in cities when distinguished in the highest degree by art and splendour, is a part of the great plan of Providence, and consonant with all the higher purposes of religion, so as not to be indiscriminately denounced by any man with-

out exposing himself to a graver charge than that of inconsiderateness and folly. There is an appearance of piety in certain modes of treating this subject, which, when examined, is found to consist of a specious veil thrown over notions and feelings the contrary of the pious.

Were this paramount sanction much less explicit than we find it, we might have been led, from other considerations, to the same conclusion on this subject. It would not have been possible that men of discernment should have observed the general effect of city associations, notwithstanding the evils always attendant upon them, without regarding them as existing in this relation to the divine purpose. It is upon such combinations that man must always depend for the means of security against hostile numbers. So soon as it becomes possible that there should be union with a view to what is wrong, it becomes necessary that there should be union with a view to what is right. It is only from this source that we can possibly derive safety, either in regard to our property or our persons. On such connexions man further depends for means to diminish the inquietudes and discomforts inseparable from a state of rudeness, and to surround himself with facilities to higher enjoyment. If such exemptions from inconvenience and suffering, and such acquisitions in relation to enjoyment are within our reach, it is plain that man is only fulfilling his destiny in availing himself of them in the largest measure possible. Every living thing, from the hyssop that springeth out of the wall to the noblest of the animal creation, has its appointed development; and in the discipline, expansion, and force of the human

faculties, as realized in the civic associations of mankind, we see the development which has been manifestly assigned to human nature. In such relations the aptitudes of the human mind are placed under due culture, and man is assisted in making his nearest approach toward the fullest use of his capabilities.

It is felt, accordingly, to be against nature, that any community of minds, or that any solitary mind, should be disposed to retrace the steps which have once led from barbarism to refinement. Nor do men always sufficiently remember how much of the habit of mind which qualifies them to enjoy their seasons of seclusion and repose, has been derived from those more busy scenes of life, which give a new keenness and compass to the power of observation, and open a new world of susceptibilities in the heart.

Great cities may possibly become too large, as great capitalists may become too rich, and as great landholders, may become too powerful; but who can be competent to lay down any general rule in such matters? Will not the ever-changing pressure of circumstances always determine for itself between the expedient and inexpedient in such cases? Can it be wise, can it be just, to seem to repudiate a system, because it is not necessarily exempt from the evils of fluctuation, or from occasional excess? Is the good influence to be accounted as nothing, even while immeasurably outweighing the evil, simply because the good is not wholly secure against an admixture of evil?

It has not been difficult to show, that modern society possesses some important advantages, as compared with ancient. Nor is it to be doubted that the existing ten-

dencies toward the formation of great cities, are of a nature to carry with them much promise of benefit in regard to the future condition of the human family. But in our world, neither the good nor the evil is found to make its appearance alone. The possession of vantage ground does not necessarily suppose the disposition to use it wisely. It might be easy to demonstrate that we ought, in our altered circumstances, to be wiser, better, and happier than our predecessors. But our greater power to do right, may bring along with it greater temptation to do wrong. In the case of nations as of individuals, virtue and happiness are not so much the result of chance or of necessity, as of deliberate preference, and well-regulated pursuit. An increase in the means of improvement, must bring an increase of responsibility ; but it must be obvious, that our condition will be a better or a worse condition, as these means shall have been used or abused.

If we are ourselves found pursuing the better course, in these better circumstances, the state of society in the future will be an advance upon its most favourable state in the past. But it may be otherwise. We may not cherish a due feeling of our responsibility. Our superior knowledge, in consequence, may prove adverse to wisdom. Our greater means of virtue may be only made to subserve the more artificial forms of depravity. Human suffering may become, as the result, more complicated, more retributive, and more hopeless. But we deem the better issue the most probable. This is our hope,—but a hope not so devoid of fear as to preclude the necessity of vigilance, precaution, and effort.

SECTION II.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO PHYSICAL SCIENCE.

REGARDING great cities in their relation to physical science, we may safely speak of this branch of intelligence as deriving all its higher culture, if not its existence, from the ingenuities which are natural to men in such associations. Cities are at once the great effect, and the great cause, of progress in this department of knowledge. The monuments of Thebes and Persepolis, of Athens and Rome, are as so many mutilated treatises on the science of the ancients. Next to the memorials of mind transmitted to us in the literature of an ancient city, are those presented in its monuments. In the latter we trace the developments of thought, reasoning, imagination, and taste, no less certainly than in the former; and in consequence of the peculiar visibility which attaches to them, they bring a susceptible spirit into the nearest possible fellowship with the spirits of remote times. Cities which can hardly be said to have had a literature at all, have risen to extraordinary magnificence purely as the effect of science; and in our time, the mouldering fragments which bespeak their scientific skill, furnish almost the only direct testimony to their power and character, and in some cases to their existence.

Every region that has become the home of such cities has become the home of an improved agriculture. This has resulted in part from the wealth of cities; but still more from their mechanical and scientific skill. In

this manner it has often been reserved to cities to convert the desert into a garden, and to give to the richer soils of the earth the aspect of a paradise. The science extended to agriculture by the Babylonians and Egyptians, by the Carthaginians, and by the Moslems of Spain, was hardly less conspicuous than the wonders which adorned the capitals of their respective territories. The owners of land, accordingly, have always had a deep interest in the prosperity of cities ; and when such persons begin to regard cities with jealousy, and become employed in defaming them, in cramping their resources, and in endeavouring to reduce them to a state of weakness and passiveness, they become chargeable with the baseness of ingratitude, or with the madness of self-destruction. Lands which bring forth a hundredfold in the place of thirtyfold, they owe to the science of cities ; and sales which give them a high price for their produce in place of a low one, they owe to the wealth of cities.

But while science is in this manner the parent and the offspring of cities, first creating them, and then nourished by them, it is often alleged against the character of society when made up in a great degree of commercial men, that it is sure to become imbued with a mercenary temper, inconsistent with an enlightened patronage of science, considered in its higher purposes. Nor will it be pretended, we presume, by any man, that there is no danger of this kind in such connexions.

It may be accounted probable, and indeed certain, that a body of citizens, however comparatively enlightened, will be disposed to look on science in its relation to the immediate and the practical, so as rarely to make

it an object of much encouragement, viewed in its remoter principles and tendencies. The great occupation of such persons is in production and traffic: and it is to be presumed, that, in general, the man will be most secure of their applause and bounty, whose discoveries bear most immediately on practical processes, and so upon the matter of gain. Your philosopher, disposed to indulge in lofty speculations, may possess many claims to admiration; but the large body of busy traders in a great city, will be in danger of forming their estimate concerning the value of such speculations according to their relation in respect to the market. Hence what philosophy does in giving a homely and useful application to its principles, and does often only as something by the way, rather than as its great object, is in danger of being regarded as the only thing it has ever done that was worth doing.

It is admitted, then, that high theoretic attainment in such pursuits, must always depend in a great measure upon leisure, seclusion, and meditation; and that to such habits the ceaseless action pervading great cities is by no means favourable. In the complex interests, pursuits, and relations of a large city community, we perceive much tending to secure society against great and sudden changes. It is a piece of machinery which has not been suddenly put together, and which cannot be suddenly taken to pieces. It is not the production of a single cause, and it will not be annihilated by a single cause. Nevertheless, in a state of society, so constituted, particularly where affairs, extended and mixed as they have become, are still left subject to a good deal of influence from the spirit of freedom,—in all such

communities there is a constant vibration and movement, a ceaseless occurrence of the distracting and exciting, which must be admitted to be very unfriendly to the prosecution of works demanding the exercise of silent, continuous, and profound thought. Minds which do their sincere worship to truth, and which find the happiness and charm of existence in its service, can have little congeniality with the crowded places where the working-day multitude of men do all things after their own pleasure, and often with an inconsiderateness, dogmatism, and violence natural to their imperfect mental and moral training. In some of these respects there is an obvious advantage in a more aristocratic state of society.

But if it be an error to regard philosophy as valueless except as it is applied to the immediately practical and useful, the spirit which would divorce it from such applications, or which may be disposed to look upon it as almost degraded when so applied, is not at all less censurable. It may be well that minds of the higher order should be allowed to fix themselves intently on their favourite speculations, as in a region apart; but if the mood in which minds of that class give themselves up to such pursuits shall be such as to dispose them to account it a trivial or mean thing to be useful in respect to the common affairs of men, the men engaged in such affairs owe it to themselves to discountenance such a temper in every way within their power. The worship of the beautiful, in common with the worship of the useful, may be pushed to extremes, until it becomes, in a moral sense, a homage rendered to deformity. To err in that form was the fault of many among the ancient

philosophers: and the tendency to counteract extravagance of that sort which belongs to the character of society in great cities is, for the most part, wholesome in its operation. We have no wish to see such men as Plato and Aristotle wholly superseded by such men as Arkwright and Watt. We would retain both: our civilization has its spaces for both: and either would be the better for that modification from the other which modern society has done much to realize.

It is, of course, better that science should obtain patronage from men intent only on practical objects, than that it should be without patronage of any kind; and this is the alternative awaiting it, as having its place among the people who build cities, or among the people who do not build them. Nor is this all—it is possible that the patronage of the many, though bestowed with a view to such limited objects only, may do more toward the advancement of real science than the patronage of the few, though taking in a much wider range. The quantity of patronage may do much to make up for some deficiencies in the quality. We have observed that some of our most valuable discoveries have risen up unsought, as a kind of happy accidents, in the path of investigation. Now whenever men are widely occupied in inquiry and experiment, such accidents may be expected to occur frequently. All things in nature have relations which seem to promise such results—the particular with the general, the practical with the theoretic. Men who labour much on the confines of the known, will be sure to make frequent incursions into the regions of the unknown. Where many things are done, also, some things will be sure to be done well. Mediocrity will rise into

excellence, and the fresh consciousness of power to make progress, will naturally lead to progression.

When we look, moreover, on the distracting or absorbing effect of the ceaseless action pervading great cities, it must be remembered that the end of this action is accumulation, and that the effect of accumulation is not only to raise classes above the crowd, but to raise certain minds capable of excelling in abstract studies, and others capable of sympathizing with them, into positions favourable to the indulgence of their higher preferences. Nor should it be overlooked, that if the habit of thought among such a people is not immediately congenial with this more elevated feeling, it is thought of a kind likely to prove strongly hostile to false pretension. It may undervalue the severe and retired labour which is so necessary to all real greatness; but its propensity to judge for itself, its little reverence for precedents or great names, the importance which it attaches to fact, experiment, and the testimony of the senses, its very conceit, which prompts it to conclude that it can understand everything and do everything,—all serve as a check on the presumption and on the arts of the superficial, and open a fair field on which to display the superiority of real science.

It may be that the United States will be appealed to, as affording striking evidence of the low mechanical routine to which all science is reduced, in proportion as the elements of society become more and more democratic. It should be a sufficient answer to such persons, to remind them that the republican institutions of Athens, so far from being incompatible with a high state of civic refinement, have contributed to render that city

the model of all cities in respect to such cultivation. In the history of the United States, the useful has hitherto very naturally taken a marked precedence of the ornamental, partly from the youth of the States themselves, and partly from the fact that England is, in this respect, only as another province to North America, everything new in British discovery being at the service of the Anglo-American people so soon as it becomes known among ourselves. Down to this time it has been enough that the people of the United States should apply the stores of knowledge placed continually at their disposal. Of America, we may say, her age of invention is to come. But come it will, though her danger, in common with all states in which the commercial spirit becomes predominant, will continue to be on the side of looking to science too much in its relation to mechanism and profit, and too little in relation to its less obvious and wider results. The great check upon this tendency will be found in the general intelligence of her people; in the necessary increase of wealth with certain classes among them; and in the national pride, which will always be much affected by the consciousness of this deficiency so long as it exists.

It appears, then, that apart from the influence of great cities, the higher developments of the intellect in relation to science would not be realized at all; and that when cities become so far governed by a commercial spirit, as to be in danger of falling under a mercenary influence in relation to such objects, there are many causes, inseparable from such a state of society, which are of a nature strongly to counteract the proneness to that particular form of deterioration. It would be easy

to show that the affairs of a large commercial state necessarily prefer a strong demand on all the capabilities even of the highest order of intellect. The merchant and the capitalist are fully as likely to be men of large views as the country gentleman, or as the noble who can trace his blood to the times of the Conquest, or to those of Charlemagne. The minds of such men need be familiar with all countries and with all people. It is their direct interest to acquire a knowledge of the natural and the artificial in all lands. It behoves them, also, to weigh carefully all the knowledge of which they become possessed, in order that their schemes, involving the gravest responsibilities, may be conducted with certainty. Large fortunes are seen to be realized by means of such knowledge skilfully applied, while ruin is seen as often to ensue from the want of such information and discretion. Hence the extraordinary capacity displayed by the statesmen who have grown up in the midst of such cities as Venice, Florence, and Amsterdam.

The web of social policy never becomes so intricate as when wrought up from the thread-work of commerce; and the causes which serve to elicit a peculiar genius in the ministers of commercial states, serve to generate a keen, a comprehensive, and a robust, if not a highly refined intelligence, among the leading men in such states. The intricate becomes familiar to such minds, and practice gives them a mastery over it. In such communities the power of making the difficult plain, in matters of policy, is of great price. The few, in such connexions, cannot act without the many, nor, in consequence, without becoming able teachers of the many. Even the mass of the people, in a great commercial city,

are made to feel in a much greater degree than any other people, as citizens of the world. They see that their interests depend, not on themselves, nor upon their nearest neighbours, but upon relations which subsist between them and the ends of the earth. It is only in proportion as commercial states have been capable of looking thus abroad, that they have become great. The fear, accordingly, in such a state of society, is not so much that there will be a want of boldness and expansion of thought, as that men will learn to trust with too much confidence to the powers of their own understanding, and be carried away by an ill-regulated passion for novelty, as the effect of their constant familiarity with progression and change.

SECTION III.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO THE HISTORY OF POLITICAL SCIENCE.

IF the influence of great cities on the progress of natural science is thus manifest, their tendency to foster just and enlightened views in relation to political science is no less obvious. Every municipal body must have its local regulations, and its local functionaries to carry them into effect. As those regulations have respect to the common interest, it is natural that they should be the result of something like common deliberation, and common consent. If it be reasonable that laws relating to the common interest should seem to emanate from the common will, it is further reasonable that the common

will should reserve to itself the power of choosing its own executive.

In this manner a popular character naturally attaches to municipal law and municipal authority. Every such community is constantly under influences which dispose it to imbibe the spirit, and to take up the forms of a commonwealth. In proportion as a nation becomes a nation of towns and cities, this spirit, and these forms, are likely to become more prevalent and more fixed. Cities are states upon a small scale, and are of necessity schools in relation to the policy most in harmony with the genius of a people. Political knowledge never diffuses itself more wholesomely among a people, than when it results, in this manner, slowly and steadily, from circumstances and experience; and when its principles are to be brought out upon a large scale, by men who have worked them successfully on a smaller scale.

We have seen that, even in Asia and Arabia, the spirit of commercial cities could not be prevented assuming something of this form. In Carthage it did so with great definiteness and effect; and in the Greek cities we see its matured results. The military despotism of Rome, indeed, like that of the Asiatic empires, contracted the liberty of cities within a small space; and through the middle age, the feudal power of princes and nobles sometimes proved seriously hostile to municipal independence. But everywhere in modern Europe—if we except Moslem Spain—where wealth has given power to cities, cities have become more or less free, and the centres from which nearly all the freedom of the nations of Christendom has been diffused.

In further illustration of this connexion between com-

merce and freedom, we may observe that the immediate object of commerce is gain, and that the value of property when acquired must depend on two things—the security with which it may be retained, and the liberty of the person in order to the enjoyment of it. But the safety of property, and the safety of the person, are the two great departments of civil liberty. Its whole scheme is comprehended in these two provisions. It is the natural effect of commerce to make men feel much more strongly than they would be likely to do in other circumstances, the need of this two-fold protection against wrong ; and the habit of mind which makes men sensible to their need in this respect, is of that sagacious, inventive, and bold complexion, which must qualify them to perceive how this need may be best supplied, and how to apply themselves effectually to the business of providing for it. Hence it is that the people of commercial states are so commonly a self-governed people, the money aristocracy which in time grows up among them, being much less powerful to prevent this free course of things, than the landed aristocracy existing elsewhere.

We have seen that so deep is the feeling of want in respect to these forms of protection, that in countries where the civil power has not been deemed sufficiently potent to bestow them, or sufficiently trustworthy to be the guardian of them, men have looked, as their last resort, to the authority and the sanctions of religion in order to possess them. In the west, these immunities have been realized by means of law and the magistrate ; in the east, by means of religion and the priest. Everywhere the need is felt, and provision is made in relation to it—the difference respects the forms of the provision

only, and the comparative success with which the one form or the other has been adopted.

With regard to this connexion between commerce on a large scale, and general liberty, the history of the United Provinces, and of Great Britain, are pregnant examples. In the English House of Commons we see a power which has become strong on the side of just laws and equal liberty, in proportion to the increase of the population, the wealth, and the power of the boroughs and cities which it has represented. In the capability of that house to replenish the treasury of the crown, we may trace the secret of its power in rescinding bad laws and enacting good ones, during nearly the whole period of its history. On some occasions the upper house has shown itself less fanatical or less corrupt than the lower; but, in general, the people have given the impression of their sentiments to the commons, and the commons have acted in the same manner upon the lords. In our recent history, the house which is the greatest authority in relation to money bills, has been virtually the great authority in all things; so as to make it certain, that we should speak more correctly, if not more eloquently—to use the language of a distinguished living writer—were we to describe our liberties as purchased, not so much by the blood of our ancestors, as by their money.

~~In this manner, then, the principles of self-government have ascended from the borough to the senate, from the councilmen of the city to the councilmen of the nation.~~ Such is the natural course of things. The more the principles of self-government are acted upon in the parish, the town, the great city, and the district,

the more will men be interested in the affairs of their country generally, the more competent will they be to judge of the manner in which the business of their country should be conducted, and the more probable will it be that statesmen will regulate their course by principles that will abide the severest scrutiny. Let a nation advance in intelligence and social virtue, and its rulers must be obedient to this propulsive power, and advance proportionately in the same qualities. Let the spirit and forms of constitutional liberty be thus localized through a country, and you possess in that fact the best guarantee for their being centralized in its supreme councils. In so doing, you provide for the rational exercise of popular power, and give the best security to the power itself. Rulers of an arbitrary temper have not been insensible to this truth, and have made it a great object of their policy to crush municipal independence in all cases when not deterred by a sense of weakness, or by other selfish considerations.

But while the discernment and feeling in alliance with these civic habits are thus favourable to order and liberty, we must not suppose that this new current in human affairs is without its dangers. There is no good in any of the tendencies of society without its attendant evil. The question of good or evil, accordingly, must always arise as a question of degree. Wherever the supreme power is lodged there is danger, whether it be in the hands of a monarch, of an oligarchy, or of a body of citizens. It is obvious that the supreme will, whether that of the one, of the few, or of the many may become a tyrannical will. The choice in this case can relate only to questions of probability.

In the case of the despot, everything depends on the accident of personal character. In the case of an oligarchy, there is more ground to expect permanent sagacity, but a large field is left open to selfishness. In a body of citizens we do not expect the far-sighted views, nor the steadiness in action, which are natural to a powerful aristocracy. But among citizens, little affected by class distinctions of any kind, it is reasonable to expect that the interest will appear to be the greatest which is seen to be the interest of the greatest number. The probabilities of tyranny, then, increase as you ascend from the many to the few, from the few to the individual. Particular cases may vary, but, in general, we may say, that a despot is tyrannical from fear, an aristocracy from pride, and a democracy from its sense of justice. The better or the worse may mingle in various degrees with all these forms of tyranny, but we are disposed to think that their characteristic differences are as above stated.

Sovereigns and nobles may persuade themselves that they were born to exercise the degree of irresponsible power they assume ; but no power is wielded with such a consciousness of right, as that which is felt to have been derived from the real suffrage of free citizens. In this case the physical power of the state is sustained by the moral. The power which enacts law is everywhere present to assist in giving it effect. In no case, accordingly, are men so likely to be impatient of resistance :— in none, upon occasions, can resistance be more hopeless. The duly recorded opinion of the majority is not only regarded as law, but as law in a form the most just and binding that human sagacity or virtue can devise.

Every citizen in a commonwealth is supposed to have bound himself to abide by the decisions of the majority, and in not submitting to that majority is liable to the charge of violating the first great law of the state, and a law to which he has himself been a party. It is natural that obedience should be deemed imperative, in proportion as its reasonableness is held to be indisputable. Hence there may be occasions, when the power of the greater number in a commonwealth, will prove to be more resistless than that of an aristocracy, or than that of a despot.

Excess in this form is the danger to be apprehended among ourselves, should the democratic elements of society become the sole, or the greatly preponderating power. In the United States, this form of tyranny has done much toward putting an end to all freedom of opinion. Nothing, indeed, can be more free than the press in that country, so long as it is occupied with discussions in relation to which the opinions of the majority have not been pronounced. But no tyranny can be more galling than that which is exercised in many of those states by the mere force of public opinion. In some states the minority has been silenced by acts of the most open and brutal violence on the part of the majority. Commonly, delinquents of this order have not to fear a prison or a prosecution, so much as the penalties which may be inflicted in other ways by the sovereign majority, to which the offence has been given. Its frown meets the recusant at every turn. His social ties are severed; his position, and his hopes in relation to the future are gone. A species of civil excommunication has passed upon him. He is not shut up in

prison, but he is precluded from his place among his fellows. He is not sent into exile, but he is made to feel as an exile in the midst of his brethren. He is not denied the exercise of his talents, but in vain now will he hope to find them appreciated. Heavy fines are not laid upon him, but his resources from society are cut off; and if he does not die at once from a blow inflicted on the body, it is, too often, that he may die of the more protracted and exquisite torture inflicted on the mind. These rigorous penalties are of course reserved for those who offend against the favourite notions of this new Grand Lama—the majority. But it is sufficiently humiliating to find that there should be anything in the utmost freedom of opinion to expose men to such consequences among a people professing to be free.

By this mere force of opinion, the voice of the abolitionist is totally silenced through the states of the south, and made to be pitiably feeble in its utterance elsewhere. It is so far thus in relation to many other questions, that no point in the character of American society arrests the attention of the observant stranger more forcibly than the fact, that in a land of such boastful freedom men should seem to consist, to so great a degree, of the two old classes—the oppressor and oppressed, the tyrant and the slave. “Massachusetts,” says Miss Martineau, “is the head quarters of federalism. A Massachusetts man has little chance of success in public life, unless he starts a federalist. The trial is too great for the moral independence of most ambitious men; and it fixes the eyes of the world on the youth of Boston. They are watched, that it may be seen whether those who now burn with ardour for complete freedom will hereafter

‘reverence the dreams of their youth,’ or sink down into cowardice, apathy, and intolerance, as they reach the middle of life.” Some of these young men of Boston have expressed themselves on this subject in the following terms: “Liberty of thought and opinion is strenuously maintained: in this proud land it has become almost a wearisome cant: our speeches and journals, religious and political, are made nauseous by the vapid and vain-glorious reiteration. But does it, after all, characterize any community among us? Is there any one to which a qualified observer shall point, and say, There opinion is free? On the contrary, is it not a fact, a sad and deplorable fact, that in no land on this earth is the mind more fettered than it is here? that here, what we call public opinion has set up a despotism, such as exists nowhere else? Public opinion—a tyrant, sitting in the dark, wrapt up in mystification and vague terrors of obscurity; deriving power no one knows from whom; like an Asian monarch, unapproachable, unimpeachable, undethronable, perhaps illegitimate,—but irresistible in its power to quell thought, to repress action, to silence conviction,—and bringing the timid perpetually under an unworthy bondage of mean fear to some impostor opinion, some noisy judgment, which gets astride on the popular breath for a day, and controls, through the lips of impudent folly, the thoughts of the wise. From this influence and rule, from this bondage to opinion, no community, as such, is free, though doubtless individuals are. But your community, brethren, based on the principles which you possess, is bound to be so.”*

* *Society in America*, iii. 67—70.

We may say of this many-handed tyranny, as of all tyranny, that it is made to carry much of its own punishment along with it. Public men, in order to be popular, are obliged to be sycophants. It is not to a despot that their prudent flatteries are offered, but it is to an idol hardly less craving of adulation. In the language of its worshippers, it is not only supreme, but infallible, the reality which embodies all ideal excellence. It has this, accordingly, in common with all tyrannies, that it is the last to hear the truth concerning itself. Men do not utter that truth, because they dare not, and ignorance in consequence has the place of knowledge, and conceit the place of wisdom. American opinion will not be entitled to much respect abroad, until it shall have attained to something more like liberty at home. With restricted discussion there may be prejudice, vanity, oppression, but there will not be sound enlightenment, or real freedom. It is only as men are allowed to try all things, to do so without pain or penalty, that we can hope to see them holding fast that which is good.

It is with no feeling of pleasure that reference is thus made to this capital fault in the spirit and usage of an otherwise free and great people. But we speak thus unreservedly because we believe that the Anglo-Americans do more by this one vice to impede the principles of equal liberty among the older nations of the world, than is done by all the better points in their history and character to accelerate such principles.*

* "ALLEGIANCE TO LAW.—It is notorious that there is a remarkable failure in this department of political morals among certain parties in the United States. The mobbing events of the last few years are celebrated—the abolition riots in New York and Boston, the burning of the

Admitting the truth of all that has been said concerning the special weight attaching to law when emanating from the will of the majority, and not from that of a limited class, or of an individual, it must not be forgotten that men do not cease to be capable of doing wrong by acting together in great numbers. It is not more true that one nation may do wrong to another, than that one part of a nation may do wrong to another part. Passive obedience, then, should have its limits

Charleston convent, the bank riots at Baltimore, the burning of the mails at Charleston, the hangings by Lynch law at Vicksburgh, the burning alive of a man of colour at St. Louis, the subsequent proceedings there towards the students of Marion college, and the abolition riots at Cincinnati. Here is a fearful list!

“The first question that arises is, who has done these things? Whose hands have lighted green faggots round a living man? and strung up a dozen or twenty citizens upon the same gallows? and fired and razed houses? and sent a company of trembling nuns flying for their lives at midnight? Here is evidence enough of ignorance—of desperate, brutal ignorance. Whose ignorance?

“In Europe, the instantaneous and natural persuasion of men who hear these tidings is, that the lowest classes in America have risen against the higher. It is not so. I was informed, twenty times over, by gentlemen, that the Boston mob of last year was wholly composed of gentlemen. The only working man in it was the truckman who saved the victim. They were the gentlemen of St. Louis who burned the black man, and banished the students of Marion college. They were the gentlemen of Cincinnati who denounced the abolitionists, and raised persecution against them. They were the magistracy and gentry of Vicksburgh who hanged wayfarers, gamblers, and slaves, in a long row. They were the gentlemen of Charleston who broke open the post-office, and violated its sacred function, to the insult and injury of the whole country.”—*Society in America*, by Harriet Martineau, i., 162-164. The law gave these broad-cloth personages no power to do such things, but it was the pleasure of their high mightinesses that the things should be done, and they did them, and did them with impunity!

somewhere, even in respect to the decrees of the majority. If all citizens are equal, and if the only course left open to the minority is silent acquiescence, then the power of the majority is absolute, and absolute power is sure to carry much of its inherent evil along with it, whether wielded by one hand, or by millions. Admitting that the greater number should rule, they should not assuredly so rule as wholly to disregard the opinions of the lesser number. This should not be in any case, still less in the possible case of the lesser number being entitled to as much, or even more weight than the greater, on every other ground save that of mere numbers. The world has never seen an aristocracy, or a despotism, which has not acted more or less upon the principle of such concessions on the part of the governing toward the opinions of the governed. In popular states, it is not for the minority to make laws, but it is proper they should possess the power of modifying them, and that they should be at full liberty to oppose them when making, and to denounce them when made. In the United States, the law admits the justice of this representation ; but the written law of the statute book is neutralized by the unwritten law of society. The Janus' head is all smiles on the one side, but all frowns on the other.

It is not to be denied that among ourselves much of this evil exists. Every one knows that our great landholders make no secret, for the most part, of coercing their tenants in favour of their particular opinions. Our monied aristocracy, also, has its penalties in this shape, which it inflicts on the classes dependent upon it. By these means, in a great measure, our people are broken up into parties, and the man committed to one

side has to lay his account with much social hostility from the other. Our laws do not punish independence in politics or in religion, but society does. We have not a tyrannical majority, but we have in the place of it, tyrannical classes, and tyrannical parties. In a multitude of instances, we see that talent fails to be appreciated, character ceases to be safe, social standing is lost, wealth, employment, subsistence—all are hazarded when men dare to commit themselves to a decided course in regard to some of our great public questions. In both countries, it is from these indirect modes of oppression, more than from any positive law, that freedom of opinion is invaded.

In this country these private infractions of public liberty are not so much marked by inconsistency as in America. We do not profess the doctrines of equality in the manner of our transatlantic brethren. Our more graduated state of society may seem to be fraught with a stronger tendency toward this form of oppression. But practically, our social system lays so many powerful checks upon the form of tyranny adverted to, that the all-subduing effect of public opinion in the United States, has not by any means its strict counterpart in England. The subjects of a monarchy, and the subordinates of nobles, possess, in this respect, a greater freedom than the people of a land pervaded by an equalized citizenship. We confess, however, that this evil exists among us, and exists in such force as to constitute our great reproach, and our great danger. It is natural that men should learn to hate the invaders of freedom of opinion, whether they prosecute their vocation by passing laws against such freedom, or diffusing their influence through the

relations of society so as to convert those relations into so many instruments of punishment.

But it must not be forgotten, that with all the faults of an ill-regulated citizenship, men would possess few opinions worth contending about, and still less freedom of opinion, were there no cities. Political science, taking in the great moral questions belonging to good government, finds its birthplace in cities, and in its birthplace only will it be found to make hopeful advances towards maturity. Its aim should be to discountenance tyranny in every form—the tyranny of opinion, no less than the tyranny of law, or of the sword. Its object is the good of all, and it should know how to respect the opinions of all. It is not perfect, but it is a great good—incalculably great when compared with the ignorance, the barbarism, and the misery that would come into its place did it cease to exist. We see its faults, but all faults are comparative, and in thus setting forth the defects and vices often attendant on some of the best forms of citizenship, we do not make choice of subjection to the much greater social evils which must belong to the condition of the people who do not build cities. Our aim is not to commend barbarism, but to improve civilization, and to that end we would deal with it faithfully.

SECTION IV.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO ART.

It may now be said, that these matters of political science—properly the matters of government—belong so immediately to the common interests of men, that the people of great cities may be expected, on that account, to bestow attention upon such questions, but that the very selfishness which prompts them to be mindful of such things, is likely to render them incapable of appreciating, and indisposed to patronise, the arts which contribute to the embellishment of life, and which can be prosecuted successfully only by men of a high order of genius. This kind of objection crosses our path at almost every step in the progress of these inquiries, and it will be proper to analyze it somewhat closely, inasmuch as it carries enough of truth along with it to admit of its being made plausible, and of its being used so as to produce a very false and injurious impression.

It is not disputed, that in any land where there are flourishing cities, the territorial aristocracy will be distinguished as patrons of the beautiful in art. But whence has this aristocracy derived the wealth by means of which it indulges so largely in the gratification of those tastes? Whence has it derived these tastes themselves? And whence came the men of genius capable of ministering to such tastes? On these questions, it is not too much to say, that as the town has made the country, giving to its lands a beauty and value they would not

otherwise have possessed ; so the citizen has made the noble, by cultivating in him a taste for art, which would not otherwise have formed a part of his character. For it must be obvious that the country which should be purely agricultural, producing no more than may be consumed by its own agricultural population, must unavoidably be the home of a scattered, a rude, and a necessitous people, and its chiefs be little elevated above the coarse untaught mass of their dependents. Burgesses produce both the useful and the ornamental, and minister in this manner both to the need and the pleasure of nobles and kings. What they sell not at home they send abroad. In either case, wealth is realized ; lands become more valuable ; public burdens can be borne ; and along with the skill which produces embellishment, come the means by which it may be purchased.

In this manner, the baron has been elevated by the burgess, and courts have been refined by cities. During no small interval in the history of modern Europe, the social position of citizens in these respects was in advance of the social position of courtiers. We see little in the picturesque beauty and brilliancy of the feudal mansions and royal palaces of the sixteenth century, which had not existence, in the public edifices, if not in the private dwellings, of the great commercial cities on the continent some centuries earlier. In the fourteenth century a queen of France dined publicly with the citizens of Bruges, when it was observed that several hundred ladies, wives and daughters of the citizens, were dressed in more costly attire than adorned the person of royalty. We have every reason to conclude that the

place of assembly on that occasion was in keeping with all this splendour, being equal, if not superior, to anything that might be seen in the palaces of kings. It was not until the merchant palaces of the great commercial cities of Italy, Germany, and Flanders, had become such as to excite the envy of the feudal aristocracy, that the interior of the baronial castle began to display the costly in decoration, and the beautiful in art, in the manner which has been made so familiar to us in the later period of European history. Such tastes have their place in the history of our military nobles, as matters of adoption, and not as matters of invention; and were borrowed, moreover, from the classes in society which their descendants so often affect to despise. For it was not until this conduct on the part of citizens—this presuming to outshine their betters, had excited some indignation as well as jealousy, that the aristocratic tastes of Europe began to take that higher tone which has since characterized them.

We can readily suppose that such tastes would be more chastely cultivated, and would seem to have risen to their more appropriate place, when they became allied with hereditary greatness in the possessors of the soil. It will be admitted, that, notwithstanding some occasional and strong exceptions, there is generally in an aristocracy a spirit and dignity, an almost innate sense of the proper, which could hardly fail to bring improvement in that form along with it. It is nevertheless true, that the revival of the fine arts in Europe was much more the work of its merchants than of its nobles or of its princes. Had the noble families of Europe all perished, an aristocracy of wealth and genius

would have risen in place of an aristocracy of privilege, and would, no doubt, have conferred on such refinements much of that kind of patronage which has been dispensed in their favour during the last three or four centuries by other hands. Even now, were cities to cease, the fine arts would cease. It is probable they would linger last, where they made their appearance last—in the mansion of the great landholder; but, ceasing to have any connexion with the trader and the citizen, they would soon die out everywhere.

It would seem to be the notion of some men that where there is no high hereditary class, possessing large hereditary wealth, there can be no successful cultivation of art, or of intelligence of any kind, in their higher forms. But the slightest acquaintance with the history of ancient Greece should have sufficed to prevent such an error. It may well be doubted, if the world would hitherto have seen such an age as that of Augustus, or that of Louis XIV., if it had not previously seen the age of Pericles. It is a remarkable fact, and one which the class of persons adverted to would do well to consider, that the states of Greece, which knew nothing of hereditary distinctions, which were not possessed of large wealth, which consisted of so many city communities, and were pervaded generally by the spirit of republicanism, colonization, and commerce—that it was given to those states to supply to all subsequent time the highest models of the wonderful in science and art, models which the proudest empires have done well to imitate, which they have rarely equalled, and never surpassed.

In saying thus much, we do not say that a large class

of wealthy patrician families may not exercise a most beneficial influence on the progress of art. We only maintain that the successful patronage of the fine arts depends less on the existence of noble families, than upon the existence of prosperous cities. Without the former kind of patronage, art may be wanting in some of its higher attributes; without the latter, it would cease to exist. Such is not the common idea on this subject, even with persons who flatter themselves that they understand it very much better than their neighbours. Such is nevertheless the true idea. The republican traders of Holland could boast of a fine school of art in the seventeenth century, while a hundred years were to pass, before England, with all the supposed advantages of her aristocratic institutions, could be said to possess one. We have become great in art, as we have become great in commerce, and only in that proportion. Since the seventeenth century, we have surpassed the Hollanders almost immeasurably in our naval power, in our colonial empire, and in our commercial greatness, and our school of art is just such an improvement on the Dutch school, as the wide and powerful influence which has thus come upon our affairs might have led the sagacious to expect.

Nor should it be overlooked, that the qualities of aristocratic patronage which are favourable to art in some respects, are very unfavourable to it in others. It is a patronage which is naturally restricted to works of the highest class. Its smile is hard to win, and is rarely obtained until the artist has gained a position which makes him in a good degree independent of it. Struggling genius has often had reason to be thankful that

there is a lower patronage as well as a higher. It is only the aristocracy in art that are allowed to rise to some affinity with the aristocracy in rank.

It is true, democracy is not without its pride and jealousies in relation to such things. It has often dispensed its frowns so as to preclude the private citizen, however opulent, from any ostentatious indulgence of his taste in this form. The feeling of repugnance to any marked display of this kind in the case of the leading men of the state, was very strong in the Greek republics; and we find that the same causes have served to produce and perpetuate a similar feeling in the United States. It is a condition of social feeling which generates two evils—it invades liberty, and it discourages art.

But while it is in the nature of a democracy to be thus jealous even of the appearance of an inroad upon the great line of equality, it generally compensates for the good which it prevents with the one hand, by that which it confers with the other. It discountenances the private patronage of art, but it can lavish its wealth, almost without limit, upon edifices and monuments designed to do honour to the state—and thus the waters which are shut out from many lesser channels, flow naturally in greater confluence along their permitted course.

In a republic, man learns to look on all about him as, in a sense, his equals. It is to the state only that he can bow as to a superior. He sees a majesty in art, and he knows of no connexion appropriate to it, in its more conspicuous and imposing forms, save the majesty of the state. His jealousy of assumption where all should be

equal, his proud estimate of himself, the homage with which he regards that mystic image the state, and the reverence with which he looks on art, all concur to put him upon this course. Our own exemption from the undue influence of this feeling is one of the advantages arising from our mixed state of society.

It appears, then, that the ornamental arts owe their existence to the same causes which give existence to cities ; and that society becomes possessed of the beautiful in art, only as cities become prosperous and great. It has appeared, moreover, that while there are advantages and disadvantages pertaining to the different forms of civil society, as regards their influence on art, it is a fact, that the popular states of antiquity have supplied the models in relation to this high department of civilization, which the more aristocratic, and the monarchical states of later times, have been content to imitate or mutilate, but which they have not been known to improve.

SECTION V.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO LITERATURE.

WE are now to glance at great cities in their relation to literature. Looking broadly on the history of literature, we may separate it into three sections or stages—the bardic, the classical, and the popular. Of the bardic period we have our most striking example in Homer ; the classical we see in the literature of Greece from the age of Herodotus ; the popular began with the Reformation, and, widening through every generation since that

time, is peculiar altogether to modern society. The influence of cities on literature in all these stages is everywhere manifest.

It is not too much to class even Homer among city poets. He sung the deeds of chiefs from the cities of Epirus, Thessaly, and Argos. The wide movement, and the protracted and ever-shifting struggle which he describes, had respect to the siege and capture of a great city. Bards may exist in a much ruder state of society, as among the ancient Britons and the Northmen, but the wild songs natural to that stage of barbarism can hardly deserve a place in the history of literature. It is only as we approach the heroic age in the history of nations, the age which intervenes between the barbarous and the properly civilized period, that society begins to possess a literature. The troubadours of Europe, in the middle age, were the proper counterpart of the Greek rhapsodists in the age of Homer. In both classes we find the lyric poets of love, war, and religion; and both exhibit the sentiments belonging to those topics—not in the rudeness which characterizes them among wanderers and barbarians, but in the comparatively softened and elevated form natural to them when modified by the civilization of cities—of those smaller cities which, in the history of nations, precede the greater.

Such is the literature which makes its appearance as men begin to have a settled dwelling-place, to plough the land, and to enclose their dwellings within the walls, and gates, and turrets, which mark the exterior of cities. In its classical form, we see it under the full influence of the state of society which obtains in great cities. This is properly the aristocratic form of literature; and this

was its form in all the Greek cities, inasmuch as the polity of those cities, though described as republican, always partook much more of the character of an aristocracy than of a democracy. The disputes in Athens and Sparta, and elsewhere, were never disputes between the few and the many, but always between one class of the few and another class. The greater part of the population in every city had no share in the honours of citizenship. It was the same in Rome during the republican period. The contentions between the patricians and plebeians had no reference to the mere possession of citizenship, but to particular distributions of its powers, honours, and emoluments. The whole literature of antiquity, accordingly, may be described as that of an aristocracy. It grew up with the privileged classes in great cities, and it never ceased to commend itself exclusively to those classes.

What this kind of literature was in Athens in the age of Pericles, it was in Rome in the age of Augustus, in Paris during the reign of Louis XIV., and in London toward the close of the latter period. Its characteristics are sufficiently marked : it is a literature addressed to men of education and leisure ; and to men who are not disposed that their intervals of leisure should become spaces of labour, or of any inconvenient effort. It has its place with the amusing and the ornamental, more than with the absorbing or the useful. It is fully as much an affair of style and manner as of thought and substance. Literature, in this stage, becomes a species of art, which men study for its own sake ; its elaborate conformity to certain received rules, and the polish given to all its details, being its great attraction. It

has, accordingly, more of learning than of nature, more of the artificial than of the truthful or the heart-stirring. It is more congenial to men who are at ease, than to men who are in action. It is a reflection for the most part of the tranquil or the frivolous in society, and has little connexion with its solemn interests, its deeper agitations. It abounds in pictures of city character and city life ; its works are found in the boudoir, the drawing-room, and the select library, but they are not expected to descend much lower. It looks to the patronage of the great, as to the air in which alone it can live. As the pensioner on greatness, it becomes the flatterer of greatness ; as pledged to the worship of the most artificial class in a highly artificial state of society, it becomes itself most artificial. In poetry, its learned allusions, which could never interest on account of their absurdity, become vapid from iteration ; and its language degenerates after awhile into a species of jargon, adapting itself equally to the languid follies which make up real life in such connexions, or to the description of romantic sentiments and situations which never had place in real life anywhere.

We speak in this manner with a view more especially to the literature of France and England toward the close of the reign of Louis XIV. Faults of this nature, however, attach more or less to an aristocratic literature in all ages. In Greece and Rome, the men of style were in a greater degree men of thought. But the difference in this respect would have been less marked if the authors of those times had possessed the same facilities of publication with their successors in Paris and London. The number of works published would have been greater,

their average quality would have been less elaborate, and the difference between the ancients and the moderns would have been much less perceptible. The ordeal which it was necessary to pass in ancient times, in order to realize a literary existence, was much more formidable than in later times, and the authors in consequence were fewer, and in some respects better.

In short, the error of every aristocracy in respect to literature, resembles that of the pharisee in respect to religion, it consists in a scrupulous tithing of mechanism, and forms, and phrases, and in a neglect of the weightier matters of the subject—nature, power, and utility. In its patronage of art, something of this defect may generally be perceived, though in that department the preponderance of its good influence is much more obvious, principally because the models in that department which we possess from antiquity are much more perfect, leaving no space for absolute novelty, but simply for new combinations, in order to their being fully adapted to any conceivable progress of society and taste.

So intimate, then, is the connexion between the classical period, in the history of literature, and the state of society in great cities. It presents a faithful reflection of the tastes, not of the people generally, but of the ruling classes among them. It becomes a thing of fashion, almost as much as the furniture of a drawing-room, or the matters of a wardrobe. It is not more natural that every court should have its pageant, than that every such state of society should have its literati. With this class of persons also, the capital—the great city, is sure to be the special point of attraction. All the objects most valued by them may there be realized on the largest

scale ; and, in this patron stage of literature, where we find the people of rank we must seek the men of letters.

But there is still another stage in the history of literature—the popular. This form of literature made its appearance, as we have said, in the age of the Reformation. The new literature of that period soon prompted the popular mind to extend its thoughts from the questions of religion to the questions of liberty. During several generations past, it has been especially adapting itself, more and more widely, to the popular apprehension ; and in proportion as it has descended toward society generally, it has aimed to give simplicity and impressiveness to a greater variety and a wider compass of subjects. The people, in consequence, have now a literature in common with the peerage. Great cities also, which have raised our nobles from the condition of men almost wholly occupied in conducting petty and barbarous wars, to become the patrons of art and literature, have now raised a large portion of our people from their former state of ignorance and sensuality, to their present measure of acquaintance with letters, and with the means of mental improvement. From cities both classes have derived their intelligence, and all the pleasures connected with it ; and upon cities both classes depend for the continuance of the state of things thus produced. Even now, the multitude who are employed in making contributions to our popular literature, look to find their readers much more among traders and artisans than among farmers and peasants. In all calculations on this very material point, the experience of such men

prompts them to look with special interest to the population of our great cities.*

But if classical literature has its defects as well as its excellences, we shall not expect it to be otherwise with the popular. It must be remembered that this is a literature which is not only meant to go into the hands of the people, but a literature which is in great part produced by them. In proportion as the multitude acquire the habit of reading books, many from that class will become employed in producing them. Popular literature commends itself to minds in every grade, and it is in part the offspring of minds in every stage of that gradation. Hence the laborious accuracy which is so conspicuous an excellence in classical literature, will be of little consideration with writers in this school. Many of them have never been sufficiently students in such matters to be capable of perceiving the nicer distinction of terms, or of deriving pleasure from great refinement and beauty of expression; and as the many whom they

* On this point the following statement has been recently made at a public meeting, by Mr. John Bright, of Rochdale:—

“I went, the other day, at Edinburgh, through the establishment of those excellent and meritorious men, William and Robert Chambers. William Chambers told us that they sell 60,000 copies weekly of their “Journal,” and that 59,000 of those copies find their way into the manufacturing districts, and not more than 1000 copies are sold in the agricultural districts of Great Britain and Ireland. He said that book-travellers for other houses, delivering tracts and numbers about the country, never even go into a farm-house. He said, moreover, that Liverpool, Manchester, and the district of which we are the centre, consume more than one-half of the 60,000 copies sold; and that Manchester itself read more of ‘Chambers’ Journal’ than the whole population of Ireland.”

address are in the same state of inaptitude, they do not perhaps find that their defects in that respect are any great impediment in the way of their success. Their aim is not so much to say things elegantly, as to say them forcibly. They do not speak to men luxuriating at ease, so much as to men occupied in labour, or living in scenes of constant excitement. They know, accordingly, that what they write must be characterized by the obvious and the striking—that men must not be expected to ponder in order to get at their meaning, or be suspected of any willingness to turn from the weariness occasioned by the pressing duties of life to be further wearied by the dulness of a book. Almost everything put forth must be of a sort that may be seized and mastered speedily.

In no stage of literature is it felt to be so true as in the popular—that a great book is a great evil. If such a work be made public it will be deemed expedient, perhaps, that it should make its appearance by little and little. Such an age is eminently the age of tracts, pamphlets, and small books, all bearing the impress of the time, produced by it, and addressed to it. Such a literature will be more a literature of talent than of learning. It will have respect to the present more than to the past; or, should it treat of the past, it will be in works of fiction more than in the manner of accurate history—the object, in this case, being excitement rather than instruction. Men disposed to learned research will naturally complain of receiving little encouragement, and will often contrast the returns obtained by authors whose works are destined to a permanent reputation, with those secured in return for a number of superficial and eph-

meral productions. Nor is it the least observable feature in this kind of literature, that as it asserts its independence of the critical canons laid down by high classical authorities, so it asserts, at its pleasure, independence of itself. In matters of taste, as affecting a people generally, one generation will not be bound by another, nor one class by another class.

Such are some of the leading characteristics of a popular literature, and such a literature we possess. But as our classical literature, dating from the commencement of the last century, has since been greatly modified and improved by some of the better qualities of the popular, so our popular literature, notwithstanding the elements in it which seem to be opposed to such an influence, continues to be strongly impressed by the remaining power of the classical. Beside that large class of writers whose efficiency is the result of natural genius more than of any laboured acquirement, we possess others, and perhaps in greater numbers, who know how to bring much of the polish, accuracy, and mastery of the one school, into alliance with the directness, aptitude, and force of the other. The widely different, and the variously blended aspects of society, as existing in this country, are thus faithfully reflected in our literature. If we have some of the defects, we have also much of the excellence belonging to these two great periods in literary history. If the effect of the diversities in social rank and political power, indicated in the terms, monarchy, aristocracy, and democracy, has not been to secure to us more of the advantages of each of those forms of polity, as the consequence of combining them together, and of bringing one to bear as a modifying power upon the other,—

it is hardly to be doubted that a benefit of this kind has resulted, from the nature of our social and political relations, to the present character of our literature. In many of the most popular departments of the British press, there is a classical propriety and beauty of expression, which could hardly have existed, had not our language been studied and refined in the manner of the last century; and withal an obviousness, a brevity, an energy—a manner of hitting off the thing intended distinctly, strongly, and at once, that would not have had its place among us, if the time had not come in which the popular mind can be no longer neglected, and in which it is felt, that to speak to that mind with effect, it must be spoken to after this manner.

In conclusion, then, it is manifest, that men possess nothing deserving the name of literature until they begin to build cities; that literature, the offspring of society as it obtains in cities, derives its character from the state of that society, varying with it in all the stages of social progress; and that the effect of commerce in augmenting small towns into great cities has been, to give to literature in our own age, a much more popular character than has attached to it in any preceding time. Let the influence of a commercial spirit on modern nations cease, and popular literature will cease. Let the great cities of Europe be accounted an evil, and let the course of legislation be to depress and subdue them, reducing them to the state of so many passive victims in the hands of the masters of the soil, and the consequence of such an ingrate policy must be, the destruction of literature in every form, and the return—the retributive return of an unlettered barbarism.

CHAPTER V.

ON THE AGE OF GREAT CITIES IN RELATION TO
POPULAR INTELLIGENCE.

SECTION I.ON THE EFFECT OF ASSOCIATION IN GREAT CITIES WITH
REGARD TO POPULAR INTELLIGENCE.

Every man of discernment must have observed that apart from any technical or direct means of instruction, there is much in the nearer, the more constant, and the more varied association, into which men are brought by means of great cities, which tends necessarily to impart greater knowledge, acuteness, and power to the mind, than would have been realized by the same persons if placed in the comparative isolation of a rural parish. As we pass from the town to the country, from the crowd to the comparative solitude, we soon become sensible to another kind of diminution than that which meets the eye. It is soon perceptible that men are losers in intelligence, in proportion as they are losers in the habit of association. In the population of a village, we see a small circle of persons, and little variety of occupation. With this monotony of pursuit, we find a similar monotony of character. The dull have little chance of being roused to shrewdness ; and those who are not dull, pos-

sess little inducement to bestow their attention on anything deserving the name of mental cultivation.

In the processes of agriculture, there is much which, to a mind of perception, should be highly suggestive and interesting. But it is painful to mark how completely devoid of any susceptibility of this nature are the persons usually engaged in such avocations. This observation applies much too generally even to the farmer himself. But with regard to the whole class below him, it is always matter of agreeable surprise if we find in them any degree of capacity above the low average required in order that they may go through the round of sheer manual labour assigned to them. In the history of these men and women, we see the animal toil of to-day followed by that of to-morrow, and amidst scenes clothed in beauty, rich in the most wonderful changes, and teeming with abundance, it is reserved to the human spirit to appear as the unnatural, the unproductive, the unlovely—as the exception, where it should be as the glory. There was a time when English prejudice,—that very old and deeply besetting infirmity of our nation—could make its boast of this people as—“the finest peasantry in the world”! But the ignorance, or the dishonesty, betrayed in such boasting, has at length become too palpable to be endured even by the prejudice of Englishmen.

It is admitted that, in England, every village may be expected to include its modicum of intelligence, in one or more of its families, and, if nowhere else, at least in the family of the ecclesiastical incumbent. Nor have we the slightest wish to deduct from the praise due to many well-meaning and right-minded persons of this

class. But no man of intelligence can have been brought into much intercourse with village clergymen or village gentry, without having had abundant occasion to deplore the strength of those prejudices by which such persons are generally beset. Popular education, except in the most limited form possible, is rarely an object of patronage in such quarters. The maxim in such connexions appears in general to be, that the amount of such instruction should always be very small, and that to dispense with it even in its humblest form, would be far better than that it should fail of making obedience to the village authorities the greatest of virtues. With many persons of this class, the idea of education in the case of working people, is always associated with a morbid dread of disaffection and disobedience. Inasmuch as it is not possible that a villager should be taught to read, in order to his reading such books as may be placed in his hands by his superiors in the parish, without his being exposed to the danger of reading books which may come to him through some less orthodox channel, it is not uncommon to hear these cautious guardians of the popular feeling speak of the schooling of such minds, in any measure, as being of very questionable utility.

In short, as society takes its gradations in wealth, station, and profession, it seems to be almost unavoidable that the higher classes should be slow to entertain the notion that the condition of the lower, in respect to education, can ever be materially other than it has been. It seems to be as natural that class should strive to make good its ground against class, in every stage of this ascent, as that man, in the ordinary jostlings of life,

should endeavour to maintain his footing against man. If the privileged sometimes admit that the state of the unprivileged may be ameliorated, and that some change of that nature would be desirable, it is generally with the cautious reserve that nothing beyond some slight modification is to be sought or expected. The great lines of the social framework must not be materially disturbed. The past, in all that has been characteristic of it, must be extended to the future. In this manner, those who possess the prizes of life, betray their jealousy of all appearances which seem to prognosticate that others who have hitherto been excluded from them may be raised to participate in them. Hence the great object of the upper portions of society is stationariness and repose—while that of the lower is wakefulness and movement. The one sees everything to fear in change, the other looks to it in the buoyancy of hope.

In England, these opposite elements compete in forces so nearly equal, that multitudes, whose principles require them to be still, are constrained by circumstances to be in motion. They know that the momentum of modern society will not spend itself in air; and in order that it may not tell wholly against them, they seize upon it, and make some awkward efforts toward turning it to their own account. Such persons have little faith in the common talk with regard to the advantages of popular education: but they would rather engage in educating the people themselves, than see them educated by parties to whom they are opposed in politics, or in religion, or probably in both. We may add, also, that while prejudices of this nature are sufficiently prevalent in most rural districts to render the efforts made

toward this object comparatively feeble, the greater difficulty of sustaining a teaching apparatus for the few in a village, than for the many in a town, must always operate as a disadvantage on the side of the peasant, as compared with the artisan.

That neither our rural clergy nor our rural gentry should be exactly pleased with this representation of matters can excite no surprise. But the representation may not be the less accurate on that account. The fact that the greater part of our peasantry are nearly as untaught as the cattle they drive, would not meet us as it does, were it not true, that thinly peopled districts are necessarily very unfavourable to learning and mental culture, even in their most elementary forms ; and were it not also true, that the few intelligent and opulent families scattered through such districts, are prevented by their prejudices from doing all they might do, even in their circumstances, with a view to that object. It must always be difficult to obviate this disadvantage on the side of the country as compared with the town ; but in England, where provision of this kind is left almost entirely to voluntary effort, the rural district, in which there are the greatest obstacles to surmount, is the department in which there is the least disposition to exertion.

In the ancient republics, we find some of the greatest men no strangers to the handling of the plough. Even now, in the United States, the agriculturist is not inferior to the townsman in intelligence. But in both these cases, it is the citizen who has become the tiller of the ground, and he has not suffered the former character to become merged in the latter. In the old states of

Europe, and in England among the rest, it is not so, and the ignorance and wretchedness characterizing the European peasantry are the consequence. They are no longer serfs, as regards their political condition, but hitherto their minds have shared little in the emancipation conferred upon their persons.

As men congregate in large numbers, it is inevitable that the strong should act as an impetus upon the weak. In other respects, also, the pressure of numbers is necessarily on the side of intelligence. It is a mistake to suppose that minds of the same class possess no more power collectively than they possess separately. Supposing the same degree of capability to belong to them all, its combinations will be more or less different in each, and the consequent modification of the view taken by each in relation to any given subject, must contribute to form an aggregate intelligence, which will be of much greater variety and compass than would have pertained to any separate mind. It is this which gives so much weight to public opinion. It is the opinion of persons who, taken separately, are all fallible, and who do not cease to be fallible by becoming united ; but each has looked at the matter before him, not only in the exercise of the ability common to each, but also in a manner in some degree his own, and the opinion which comes forth the approved of all, may be said to be the result of what is common to all, and of what is peculiar to each. Will it now be said that inasmuch as each of these men is fallible they must all be fallible, and that, in consequence, by asking the opinion of any one of them we might have saved ourselves all trouble of going further ? Such reasoning would not only repudiate all attempts to

ascertain general sentiment, but would proscribe trial by jury as a piece of machinery made to be just eleven times more cumbrous than it need to have been !

Cities, then, are the natural centres of association. Of course the advantages derived from association are there realized in an eminent degree. Men live there in the nearest neighbourhood. Their faculties, in place of becoming dull from inaction, are constantly sharpened by collision. They have their prejudices, but all are liable to be assailed. Manufactures, commerce, politics, religion, all become subjects of discussion. All these are looked upon from more points, talked about more variously, and judged of more correctly, as being matters in which a great number of minds are interested, and on which those minds are not only accustomed to form conclusions, but to form them with a view to utterance and action. It may be the lot of very few to possess much vigour of thought, but each man stimulates his fellow, and the result is a greater general intelligence. The shop, the factory, or the market-place ; the local association, the news-room, or the religious meeting, all facilitate this invigorating contact of mind with mind. The more ignorant come into constant intercourse with the more knowing. Stationariness of thought is hardly possible, and if its movements are not always wise, the errors of to-day are as lessons of experience for to-morrow. Such, indeed, is often the astuteness acquired in the exercise of this greatest of free schools, that the smith of Sheffield, or the weaver of Manchester, would frequently prove, on any common ground, more than a match for many a college graduate. But does your man of technical education ever apprehend any such rencontre

with the village ploughman? Or has it ever occurred to him to reckon the ploughman's assistant as superior in shrewdness to the city apprentice? In short, nothing can be more plain, than that the unavoidable intercourse of townsmen must always involve a system of education; and that while instruction reaches, in such connexions, to a much lower level than elsewhere, minds of better capacity naturally make the common intelligence about them the starting-point in their own race of superiority.

It has been intimated that in towns there are greater facilities than in the country for conducting education in its more direct and technical form. These facilities are greater in towns, partly on account of their greater wealth, and their greater freedom from prejudice; and partly in consequence of their more general sympathy with popular improvement, and their comparative freedom from the discountenance or control of powerful individuals or classes. Towns are not like villages, subject, it may be, to the oversight and guidance of a single family, or of a single clergyman. They possess greater means and greater liberty, and, in general, a stronger disposition to use both in favour of education, even in behalf of the children of the poorest.

In towns also, where numbers may be more easily collected, masters find a better return for their toil, and the practice of teaching on a larger scale brings with it a greater proficiency in the art of teaching. In the one case, too, the public reap the benefit of competition; in the other it is hardly admissible. In the populous town, a field is open to different labourers. Every man has space in which to make trial of his favourite method. The observers are many, and the stimulus is propor-

tionate. But in the rural district, it is probable that the schoolmaster will enter upon the duties of his office with no great aptness for the discharge of them ; and when it is remembered that the number he will be required to teach will generally be small, that the instruction he will be expected to impart will be very limited, and that in imparting it he will know nothing of competition, and be subject in general to very imperfect oversight, it will be seen that the natural course of things, both as respects the character of the teacher and the result of his labours, is in nearly all points the reverse of that which may be reasonably expected in a city population.

With regard to mechanics' institutes and literary institutions, it is obvious that the benefit to be derived from them must be restricted almost entirely to the people of towns and cities. In most of the towns of Great Britain such associations exist. In the larger cities they are numerous, and their advantages are made accessible to almost every grade of the community. Of course the knowledge communicated by such institutions must always be elementary and popular, rather than comprehensive or profound. But the natural effect of such associations is to strengthen the taste for improvement where it exists, and often to create it where it is not. They serve to bring something more of the intellectual into alliance with the commercial. By such means the mind is taken, in some degree, from the groove of its daily occupation, and glimpses are opened to it, showing the manner in which the closer exercises of thought have conduced to wealth, and power, and greatness. The library, the reading-room, the debating class, and the lecture theatre, all contribute to this result. Where

this effect is produced, leisure ceases to be a burden. Much is done to redeem it from the bait of sensuality. The mental and moral habits of many thousands among our young men have been thus affected by such means. They have learnt to regard the desk of the lecturer as holding a relation to science and literature, similar to that of the pulpit with respect to religion. It is not expected that the former will suffice to make men great philosophers or scholars, any more than the latter will suffice to make them profound theologians. But the people among whom there is the most general feeling of sympathy with religion, are the people among whom we expect to find the greater number of sound divines; and, on the same ground, the connexion in which we find the most widely diffused sympathy with investigations relating to science and scholarship, is the connexion in which we may expect to find the greatest number of men distinguished by real science and real scholarship. In these things there is a constant action and reaction between the great attainments of the smaller number, and the small attainments of the greater. The great classical authors were, if we may so express it, a natural product from the general state of things which obtained in the cities with which their names are associated. In this manner, the excellence distinguishing the few, is seen to derive its nutriment and power from its relation to the average perception and feeling of the many.

Nor will it avail to object that religion is every man's business, and that the same is not true of science or literature. These subjects are alike the business of every man, in proportion to the capability and the time which every man may bring to them. If the trite saying—"a

little learning is a dangerous thing," be true of any branch of knowledge, it is true of all branches—religious knowledge not excepted. Superficiality has its dangers everywhere, and especially in relation to those subjects which are in their own nature the most profound and mysterious. On this ground, the little knowledge possessed concerning religion, may be even more dangerous than the little possessed concerning any other topic. The little is liable to abuse, but not more than the great, and not more in one thing than in another. The great in knowledge is no doubt preferable to the small ; but a little knowledge is always better than none. If knowledge is to be counted a bad thing according to this law of mere quantity, we see not why all things liable to abuse should not be subject to the same law, and men be warned, in consequence, of the miserable fate awaiting them should it be their lot to become possessed of wealth, or power, or pleasure, only in small quantities ! Be sure of it, the men who are upstarts in knowledge, are the men who would make a similar display of the character natural to them in the absence of knowledge. Keeping them in ignorance is not the way to cure them of their vanity, but rather the contrary.

In large towns, and in whole countries, where the civic feeling is allowed to predominate, the views expressed on this subject in the preceding pages generally prevail. In New England, a considerable course of religious and general instruction obtains, with which the mind of the young, without exception, is expected to become familiar. No youth is left in ignorance concerning the evidence or nature of the faith which he is expected to profess ; nor concerning the history and constitution of

the country in which he is soon to become possessed of franchise. What is said of New England, may be said of Connecticut, and Massachusetts. Each of these states is in this manner a large school-house. It is rare to find a person in them imperfectly informed on the above topics, and a man in anything like ignorance respecting them would be regarded with astonishment.

Similar is the state of things in Switzerland. In the Protestant cantons of Switzerland we find the best-educated people in Europe. Ignorance in the child is accounted a crime on the part of his parents, and the fine levied on such parental negligence is so heavy that it is very rarely incurred. In the schools, the rich and the poor, and, in some degree, the two sexes, mix together, without any of the evil consequences that may be thought to be natural to such associations. The apparent distance, indeed, between the rich and poor, and between the employer and the employed, is not so great in those cantons as among ourselves. But the mutual fidelity and esteem are much greater. More instructed than any other community in Europe, the Swiss are also more moral, and more constant in their observance of public worship. In many districts, the genius of Calvin is still seen to pervade the whole character of his disciples. This is observable in the secular in such places, no less than in the spiritual,—industry, and the love of order and liberty, all being raised to a place among the religious virtues.*

It scarcely need be observed, that of such a state of society, especially as it exists across the Atlantic, the

* Arts and Artisans at Home and Abroad, by J. C. Symons, Esq.

ancient world knew nothing. The ignorant and enslaved mass, which grew up around the small nucleus of enlightened and free citizens in all the ancient republics, is unknown to such communities : and instead of the costly library, which was counted among the luxuries of the opulent, we see that constant flow of cheaply printed knowledge which finds its way to the home of the humblest. Men, accordingly, who reason from the histories of Greece and Rome, to the history of such states, as though they were alike, may be wise in their own conceit, but their prophecies we may be well assured are little trustworthy. What New England possesses in common with Athens, or with republican Rome, is little, compared with what she possesses as strictly her own. But it is to be distinctly observed, that in both cases, the degree of popular intelligence existing is to be traced to the influence of civic institutions ; and that the scattered cultivators of the soil become thus elevated, only as the industry which has given wealth and potency to towns, has served through their medium, to raise the country generally to the position of a larger city.

SECTION II.

ON THE EFFECT OF COMMERCE AND MANUFACTURES IN RESPECT TO POPULAR INTELLIGENCE.

So favourable, then, to intelligence, both directly and indirectly, are the social relations which obtain in towns and great cities. Our next point is, that cities owe their

origin to handicraft and traffic, and that it is the effect of the habits necessary to such pursuits to give great comparative expansion and discipline to the intellect.

Wherever men are employed in trade and manufactures, the diversity of their occupation must, in itself, suggest varied thought, and stimulate to some degree of mental effort. It is true, as the arts advance, men become intent on dispatch, which is best realized by a division of labour, and the effect of that process is to separate artisans into classes, leaving only a narrow province to each. But this method of proceeding must have its limits, and where most acted upon, each man knows full well what his kindred craftsman is doing, though that section of labour may be one in which he has himself no share.

It is also in the nature of machinery that it should, at least in many cases, greatly lessen the demand on the spontaneous ability of the workman. Results which once depended in a great degree upon his individual skill, are made to follow, and with more certainty, from the action of the instrument which he is now required to superintend. But the action of that machine is as a constant lesson on human ingenuity. It shows what that ingenuity has done, and suggests what it may do. Less demand may be made on the manual skill of the mechanic, but that does not prevent his thoughts from being familiar with a wide range of ingenious operation. If an old man, he will know something of the history of his craft, and of others carried on about him; and in many cases his mind will be a chronicle of the inventions which have so greatly changed the processes of manufacture since the years of his boyhood. His thoughts, we may be sure, will not be those of one who has learnt to

look upon the world as doomed to stand still. He lives in the midst of the skill and enterprise of his country; and he necessarily hears much concerning the skill and enterprise of other countries. In his mind, the leading idea in regard to society is that of progression—onwardness, and not, as in the case of the peasant, who, whatever he may see of change in the nature of his implements, is disposed to look on the processes about him as doomed to be in the main as they have been. In the view of the one, change is generally regarded as hopeful; in the view of the other, it rarely fails to be an object of misgiving and aversion, as being too commonly identical with mischief.

If there are causes in connexion with commerce which operate thus favourably on intelligence in the case of the humbler classes, to whom it furnishes employment, there are of course others of a much higher description, which affect the merchant and the capitalist. Such men, as we have already observed, possess a direct interest in knowing, more or less, the natural and the artificial of all lands, and in weighing the knowledge thus acquired, in order that it may be turned to the best account. In the wide and venturous traffic which engages such heads, the greatest consequences are known to depend on the possessing, or the not possessing, such knowledge and discernment. Hence the intricacy which belongs to social policy when taking its texture from the relations of commerce; and the causes which naturally contribute to give such caution, and compass, and vigour to the genius of the ministers of commercial states, exert a similar influence over the people generally in such states. Questions by no means simple in their nature,

are always rising to the notice of such a people. In such communities, accordingly, the power of making the difficult plain is of great value. It is only by means of the many that the few can hope to see their plans carried into effect, and this necessity devolves upon them the further necessity of becoming effective teachers of the many, and teachers of as much promptitude as vigour, the many with whom they have to deal being always immediately about them.

But whatever may be the result of a comparison between the men who have become rulers in commercial states, and those who have distinguished themselves as members of a landed aristocracy, no comparison can be made between the intelligence of the society at large with which these two classes of great men have stood respectively associated. We repeat, the people of a large commercial city feel necessarily much more than any other people, as citizens of the world. They see that their interests depend, not on themselves merely, nor on their immediate neighbours, but on the relations which they may possess sufficient wisdom and power to maintain with the ends of the earth. No nation wanting in the capacity to look thus abroad, can ever become great in the history of commerce: and the continuance of such greatness, if once realized, must depend on the continuance of that capacity—the fear being, in the case of such a people, as in the case of a prosperous individual, that men will learn to place an undue reliance on their supposed sagacity; that familiarity with change will beget an undesirable tendency towards change; and that the success which has resulted from caution, may

be followed by disaster, as consequent upon presumption. It is true, in a great degree, of states, as of men, that they think all power mortal except their own.

SECTION III.

ON THE STATE OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN AGRICULTURAL DISTRICTS.

It will be perceived that our observations in the preceding sections bear exclusively on one point—the comparative influence of the different degrees of association, and of the difference of pursuits, in cities and in rural parishes, on the intelligence of the people generally. It will have been perceived also, that they are observations which apply, for the most part, to countries in which popular education has been left, as among ourselves, to depend almost entirely on local and voluntary effort in its favour. But supposing the population of towns and cities, and the people located in large masses by manufactures, to be in circumstances more favourable to the establishment of primary schools, and in circumstances favourable in a still greater degree to an indirect culture of the intellect, than the population of a rural district, it does not follow that the portions of the community possessing the vantage ground in this respect should have availed themselves of it so fully as they might have done. It may be, that the good effects of education have been realized in such quarters on a much larger scale than elsewhere, in consequence of these greater facilities, and the result after all be pitiably limited compared with

what it should have been. The manner in which this intelligence has operated with regard to morals and religion, will be matters of distinct inquiry in subsequent chapters. Our immediate object is popular intelligence, and especially as affected by means of primary schools; and on this subject it will not be difficult to show that little has been done compared with what needs to be done, and little also compared with what has been done by many states which we are accustomed to place much below our own position in the scale of civilization.

In a report published not long since by the British and Foreign School Society, we find the following statement relative to education, in one of our richest and most beautiful agricultural counties:—"From a canvass which has been recently made by the Herefordshire Auxiliary Bible Society, it appears that out of 41,017 individuals visited, only 24,222 were able to read." It is added by the school committee, that descriptions to the same effect might be cited from their correspondence almost indefinitely—that is, to the effect that nearly half the agricultural population over great part of England are unable to read. They mention one village containing 1467 persons, of whom little more than a third had been taught to read. Villages are named in many districts as containing 1000, 1500, or 2000 inhabitants, and as being wholly destitute of any efficient school. Statements to the same effect have been frequently made by the National School Society. One description of such destitution published by this society concludes thus:—"In many places containing thousands of families, whose parents are members of the Established Church, no provision whatever exists for

the education of children according to the principles of that church.”*

Nor is it to be concluded that this ignorance is confined to the country labourer and those dependent on him. The overseers of the poor may be regarded as favourable specimens of the middle class in such districts. But the operation of the New Poor Law, and of the machinery of the Reform Bill, has served to bring out the fact, that persons even of this class are often little better informed than those of the class below them. Mr. Whately, of Cookham in Berkshire, worked the provisions of the New Poor Law in that parish in such a manner as to produce a degree of social and moral improvement which became the matter of talk and admiration in many parishes round. But when persons residing in the neighbouring parishes were pressed by the Poor Law Commissioners to go and do likewise, their answers were all to the effect, that they had not men among them of sufficient intelligence or public spirit to engage effectually in such a service. Nor is there room to doubt the general correctness of this representation. The Rev. Robert Ellison, rector of Slangham in Sussex, writes—“The accounts of eight or ten surrounding parishes should be audited by a person with a proper salary, resident in an adjoining town. It is difficult to get a proper person in villages to audit accounts. My

* *Edinburgh Review*, vol. xlviii. pp. 6—9. The result of inquiries made on this subject in four parishes in Norfolk is as follows:—Children attending school, 116; not attending school, 91. Children under fourteen years of age—can read and write, 5; can only read, 104; can neither read nor write, 98. Third publication by the Central Society of Education, pp. 371—4. These villages exhibited generally more than the usual comforts of a rural population.

vestry-clerk is a pauper, and not a good character: the two last overseers could neither read nor write. Need I say more. The rate rose last year nine shillings in the pound, which amounted to near seven hundred pounds additional. The poor cost sixteen hundred pounds: the population is not eight hundred." Similar is the description given by Major-General Marriot, an acting magistrate, concerning the division of Pershore, containing sixty-six parishes, in Worcestershire.

Mr. Moylon, a revising barrister, writes:—"The class of persons whom I have seen in the office of overseer are generally men who, far from being able to fulfil the duties imposed on them, seem unable to comprehend those duties. The general ignorance and stupidity of the overseers in country parishes with whom I became acquainted in Cheshire and Nottinghamshire, surpassed anything which I could have previously conceived. In some of the parishes we found a + substituted for the overseer's signature to the list of voters. In some cases, where the overseer had not had recourse to the aid of others, his blunders were ludicrous." Mr. Maclean writes:—"In 1832 I revised the list of voters for the western division of the county of Sussex, and in the present year I have revised the list of the northern division of the county of Essex. In both counties I found overseers apparently perfectly unable to comprehend, from reading the Reform Act, what they were required to do. Many were unable to write at all, and others could with difficulty affix their name to the list. Few were capable of furnishing any information, or of understanding that any distinction existed between a freehold and a leasehold qualification. Those

lists which had any pretension to correctness had been invariably written out by the parish schoolmaster, or under the advice and direction of some resident gentleman." Mr. Flood states, concerning the northern division of the county of Leicester—"I found great difficulty in revising the list of voters, owing to the illiterate character of the overseers in many of the parishes. There were, I think, three or four lists unsigned, none of the overseers being able to write, and about the same number signed by only one overseer. In not more than ten parishes did the overseers appear in the least to comprehend the duties they were required to perform. In about sixteen or eighteen lists the overseers had resorted to the assistance of the parish schoolmaster, or some other person to assist him. I found, however, the overseers of the parishes of Loughborough, Castle Donnington, Melton Mowbray, and Ashby-de-la-Zouch, exceedingly intelligent men; while on the eastern side of the county, where the population is *exclusively agricultural*, I met with a degree of ignorance I was utterly unprepared to find in a civilized country." Mr. Villiers, who acted in the same capacity in the north of Devon, states that he found not less than one fourth of the overseers unable to read; and he mentions an overseer who was in that state of ignorance, and was nevertheless entrusted with the distribution of rates to the amount of £7000 per annum !*

With good reason have the Poor Law Commissioners concluded the Report from which the above facts are selected in the following terms:—"We have now re-

* Report from His Majesty's Commissioners for Inquiry into the Administration of the Poor Laws, pp. 282—286.

commended to your Majesty the measures by which we hope that the enormous evils resulting from the present mal-administration of the Poor Laws may be gradually remedied. It will be observed, that the measures which we have suggested are intended to produce rather negative than positive effects ; rather to remove the debasing influences to which a large portion of the labouring population is now subject, than to afford new means of prosperity and virtue. We are perfectly aware that, for the general diffusion of right principles and habits we are to look, not so much to any economic arrangements and regulations, as to the influence of a moral and religious education ; and important evidence on the subject will be found throughout our Appendix. But one great advantage of any measure which shall remove or diminish the evils of the present system is, that it will, in some degree, remove the obstacles which now impede the progress of instruction, and interrupt its results ; and will afford a freer scope to the operation of every instrument which may be employed for elevating the intellectual and moral condition of the poorer classes. We believe that if the funds now destined to the purposes of education, many of which are applied in a manner unsuited to the present wants of society, were wisely and economically employed, they would be sufficient to give all the assistance which can be prudently afforded by the state. As the subject is not within our commission, we will not dwell on it further ; and we have ventured on these few remarks only for the purpose of recording our conviction, that as soon as a good administration of the Poor Laws shall have rendered further improvement possible, the most important duty

of the Legislature is to take measures to promote the religious and moral education of the labouring classes.”* The names of the Bishops of London and Chester appear on this Commission, and the above passage is attributed to the pen of Dr. Blomfield.

SECTION IV.

ON THE STATE OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN MINING DISTRICTS.

BUT if the middle and labouring classes in cities, and in manufacturing districts, are by no means so partially instructed as the same classes in agricultural parishes, the state of primary† education in all places where large masses of our people are congregated for the purposes of manual labour is sufficiently limited and humiliating.

Our civilization owes its origin, in a great degree, to our mineral wealth. Our miners, accordingly, constitute a large section of our population, and form a class distinct both from artisans and agriculturalists. The population, for example, of the great coal districts of Durham and Northumberland, has been estimated at 42,120. Of this number, 23,740 are supposed to be above fourteen years of age. Of this 23,740 it is calculated that 12,250 can read and write, that 7193 can only read, and some of them imperfectly. This leaves about 4000—a little more than one in five—who cannot read at all.‡

* Report from His Majesty's Commissioners for inquiry into the Administration of the Poor Laws, p. 362.

† We use the word *primary*, in this connexion, in the sense of *elementary*.

‡ Minutes of the Council of Education, 1840-1, pp. 52—56.

School instruction, it seems, is in a much lower state among the miners in Cornwall, but this deficiency is in a great degree compensated by other circumstances. The children usually go to work in the mines with their parents at ten years of age, which leaves them little opportunity for gaining instruction from day schools. It is stated, accordingly, that among the adult population a large proportion, particularly among the females, are not able to read, and fewer still to write. But in the seven parishes of which this report has been made, there are twelve churches, and not less than sixty dissenting chapels, and thirty-seven common day-schools. The population is about 52,000. Of those between the age of five and fifteen, about half are said to be in attendance at the day-schools ; and to this amount of instruction we must add that which is given in the Sunday schools—institutions which are very numerous, well attended, and supported with great zeal. The religious feeling of the Cornish miners is very general and strong ; all are connected with some place of worship, and the religious exercises with which they are familiar exert a very favourable influence on their natural intelligence. It is found, also, that there is much in the nature of their employment which is adapted in a measure to awaken and invigorate the mind—for it must be remembered that these people are not so much colliers, as miners in the larger sense. From all these causes, the uniform impression on the part of the stranger concerning this people is, that they are much above the average of a labouring population, both in capacity and morals.

In no quarter has the mining population of Great Britain become so much an object of public attention as

in South Wales, and nowhere so much to their discredit. But in Monmouthshire, the men of the collieries, and those of the great iron-works, are almost the same people, and they constitute a class distinct in a great degree from the people of most mining districts, and still more distinct from the people of the principality generally. Notwithstanding their fiery temper, and comparative rudeness, there is not a more orderly or a more moral people upon the earth than the people of Wales, both in the North and South. Over the country generally, what is wanting in school instruction—and it is very much that is wanting in that shape—is in great part supplied by the self-sustained means of cultivation connected with religion. Indeed, with the Welsh people, generally, the fault in political matters is not so much in any tendency toward insubordination, as in a feudal passiveness of temper, and a disposition to regard their great families with a superstitious reverence. Persons, therefore, who judge of Wales by the collieries and iron-works of Monmouthshire, will do its people much wrong.

About two-thirds of the men in the recently-disturbed districts were Welsh : the remainder, with the exception of a very few Irish, were Englishmen, mostly from Staffordshire, or from the English counties bordering on the principality. It is lamentable to discover how little of anything deserving the name of education has had place among these people. The Committee of Council sent an inspector of schools to ascertain the state of education among the poorer classes in that district, and their lordships say, “ they find in most parts few schools exist, or that those which do exist are so inefficiently conducted as, with few exceptions, to be incapable of exercising any

salutary influence upon the manners, habits, and condition of the labouring population." Sir Thomas Phillips, of Newport, speaks still more strongly, describing the five parishes including the principal collieries, as without "a single school capable of exercising much salutary influence upon the youthful members of the population."*

The Varteg iron works bordered closely upon this district. In consequence of the greater sobriety and order of the men in those works, Varteg passed among the late fomenters of disaffection, under the name of "the Tory works." The only difference, however, between the men at Varteg and the masses about them, was the difference which had resulted from the fact that a greater number of them were religious men. Even there, however, out of a population of 3500 persons, not more than about 800 were accustomed to attend places of religious worship, and the only schools were the Sunday schools, in which some elementary instruction was imparted to between five and six hundred children.

We may trace this want of primary instruction, in part to the insensibility of parents with regard to the value of education; and in part to the fact, that the children found occupation in the works from the time they were seven or eight years old,—being able to earn three or four, and soon some seven or eight shillings a week, the children speedily began to assume independence of parental control, and boys especially learnt to think that the way to become as great as the men was to become in all respects as depraved.

Thus far I had written on this subject before the

* Minutes of the Council of Education, 1840-41, pp. 15, 16.

publication of the report by the "Children's Employment Commission," in the spring of the present year, (1842.) That report extends to more than two thousand folio pages, and embraces a view of the mining districts in England, Wales, and Scotland—of the collieries, as well as of the mines from which iron, tin, lead, and copper, are wrought. The disclosures of this document are in many respects deeply affecting, and disgraceful in a strange degree to any civilized people, especially the parts which relate to the manner in which females and children are employed in the collieries. From these passages of the report it would appear, that some of our titled proprietors of mines, who have indulged in so much pathetic lamentation over the want of humanity in the untitled proprietors of factories, would have done well to look at home. To go to the root of this evil, and to see it in its worst form, it was necessary it seems that our scrutiny should be made to descend much lower than the floor of the cotton-mill. Of the facts placed before us in this report, considered in their bearing upon morals and religion, mention will be made elsewhere ; we look to them in this place in their effect on education.

Mr. Kennedy, one of the commissioners who have reported concerning the mining districts in Cheshire, Lancashire, and Derbyshire, has stated distinctly, that "as a rule, colliers can neither read nor write." Much is said by the commissioners in respect to the insufficiency of the instruction given in Sunday schools. Some of the children attending them, on being questioned, betrayed the lowest conceivable state of ignorance. Some could not answer the simplest questions contained in

their catechisms, others could do so, but stared in astonishment when requested to state what they understood to be meant by the language which they repeated; and while the great majority in the several districts, if they could be said to know their letters, certainly could not read, many were found who had grown up from ten to fifteen years of age without any idea of a Supreme Being, or without having heard of the existence of a Saviour. But it is admitted that, "if the Sunday schools, insufficient as they are, were not to supply something, there is not sufficient desire among the people for instruction to make a demand for teachers at any time, or in any form, during the week." In almost every district where there is any improvement in the moral and religious habits of the people, it is ascribed by the commissioners to the labours of Methodists and Dissenters, and to the national church, as "having been aroused and stimulated by their example." This better appearance of things is particularly observable among the collieries of South Gloucestershire, and altogether from this cause. Concerning the collieries and ironstone mines in Monmouthshire, it is stated that, "few of the young people have received the most ordinary education; one-fourth probably of the four hundred may read or know their letters, certainly not more; and that they have acquired at Sunday schools." The cause of this unhappy state of things, and which must be made to cease before the effect can cease, is contained in the following passage: "When the children come to about seven years of age, they are too useful to be allowed to come to school during the week; and many even go out to nurse or hire so young as five. So soon as the children can

nurse a child, push a coal-tub, or perform the least service, immediately they are employed, in the eagerness to profit by their labours in good times, to meet the necessities of a family in bad ones ; and in the prevailing want among the parents of any appreciation of the value of instruction, when there is any appreciation of it whatever, they think that the necessity is sufficiently met by the Sunday schools.”*

* The proofs of the utter ignorance of many of the children, which occur in the reports adverted to, are really astounding. We give a sample or two from a Welsh district.

Morgan Lewis, nine years old. Do not know what you mean by catechism or religion. Never was told about God. No one ever told me about Jesus Christ—cannot say who he is. *Sophia Lewis*, twelve years old. I go to the Welsh Sunday school to learn the letters. Mr. Jones tells us that Jesus is our Lord, but does not know what he means by Lord, nor who is God. There may be commandments, but I never heard of any. *Edward Davis*, about ten years old. Two years at Sunday school, cannot repeat his letters perfectly ; does not know anything about God. *Evan John*, thirteen years and a half. God was the first man ; knows nothing of the commandments. *John George*. Jesus Christ made me : thinks Jesus Christ made God. *Mary Paine*, seventeen. They never have told me anything of Jesus Christ, nor do I know who he is. *Henrietta Frankland*, eleven. Do not know whether God made me, nor anything about Jesus ; there are no commandments.

Instances are given from the collieries in Yorkshire, exhibiting the same degree of ignorance which is thus found existing in Wales. These instances occur also, both in Wales and England, in the case of children who have been for some time at Sunday schools, from which we must infer that the employment of these children has a most unhappy effect upon their capacity, or that the Sunday schools in such districts are no just sample of such institutions generally. It is easy to suppose that teachers at all competent to their office are exceedingly difficult to obtain in such neighbourhoods, but probably the two causes adverted to contribute to the painful result.

SECTION V.

ON THE STATE OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN TOWNS AND
IN MANUFACTURING DISTRICTS.

CONCERNING the state of primary instruction in our large cities, and in the manufacturing districts generally, we may, perhaps, form a correct judgment from the statistical returns printed on that subject with respect to Birmingham, and with respect to Liverpool, Manchester, and some other towns in Lancashire. From the printed reports of the Birmingham and Manchester Statistical Societies, and from a report by the Hon. and Rev. Baptist W. Noel, printed in the minutes of the Committee of Council of Education, it appears, that before the late census, the population of Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Salford, and Bury, amounted to 685,000. It is usual to calculate about a fourth of any given population as being between the age of five and fifteen, which would give 171,250 as being of that age in those towns. If we conclude that in a healthy state of things all children between the age of five and fifteen should be at school, then the number 171,250 should be so found in the towns enumerated. It is ascertained, however, that the numbers of that age attending schools of all descriptions, at one time, do not rise higher than 96,974, leaving somewhat more than 74,000 children apparently altogether without instruction.

But this mode of reckoning, so far as it respects the mere numbers who receive primary instruction in some form or other, is very deceptive, inasmuch as it does not

account children as receiving education at all, except as they are found attending school during the whole interval from five to fifteen. Now, if we suppose, as it would seem reasonable to do, that one-half of these children conclude their attendance at school in the eleventh or twelfth year of their age, instead of continuing it until fourteen or fifteen, the number thus left in a state so uncultivated as not to be able to read, must be comparatively small.

In short, the great want in such places is not that instruction in some form should be made generally accessible, but that it should be made to be of such a kind as to deserve the name of education ; that it should be instruction capable of producing the results which should characterize the educated ; and that means should be adopted, not only to allow the working classes to avail themselves of it, but to make it appear to them eminently desirable that they should do so.

Of the 96,974 enumerated as receiving instruction in the five towns mentioned, 10,236 are in superior schools ; 36,033 attend dame or common schools only ; 48,966 attend Sunday schools only ; leaving but 27,523 to attend the public elementary schools for the working classes. Of the instruction given in the superior schools we need not speak. That given in the Sunday schools only, valuable as it is on account of the moral and religious character given to it, must necessarily be very limited in other respects. Of that given in the dame and common schools, the most unsatisfactory reports are made by the school inspectors, and of that given in the day-schools designed for the children of the

working classes, there is very generally much reason for complaint.

In the common schools conducted by private masters, and in the public schools conducted by masters under the direction of local committees, the primary instruction given is limited, for the most part, to reading, writing, and arithmetic, these being in most instances only imperfectly taught, and with little judicious effort to give cheerfulness to the business of the school-room, to place the intellect under an expanding and suggestive influence, or to secure—which should be the ultimate object of all education—an effectual training of the moral faculties. In this last view, it is my strong impression, that the instruction given in the Sunday schools, defective as it may be in some respects, is more valuable in its influence on the children of the humbler and labouring classes in England, than the whole of the instruction obtained by them from other sources. In these schools, the children are not merely trained to reading, but to the reading and understanding of a book which is our best instructor in regard both to morals and religion; and the self-denial involved in the gratuitous services of the Sunday school teacher, is the best security, that, in his case, the cultivation of the moral and religious sensibilities, in common with the memory and the reason, will not be overlooked. The nature and extent of Sunday school instruction in the lowest sections of our mining districts, is no ground on which to judge in respect to such institutions generally. My own means of judging on this point, I must be permitted to say, have been much more favourable than

are likely to come in the way of government commissioners.

In selecting the towns adverted to for inquiry on this subject, I have chosen points where the want of primary instruction, as regards the trading and manufacturing population, was likely to be the greatest. Large cities in manufacturing districts, and small parishes in agricultural districts, are the connexions in which it is most difficult to bring the people generally under the influence of education. It was ascertained not long since, that there are some five hundred parishes in England without a public school of any kind. Most of these we may presume are small agricultural parishes. In such places it would seem to be in vain to hope for the support of any efficient school by local and voluntary effort. While in great cities, the number of those who neglect the means of education when provided for them, is always much greater, in proportion to the population, than in small towns; partly from the greater temptations to form vicious habits, and especially from the fact, that the humbler classes being less subject to control, a greater number account themselves at liberty to indulge in such habits as comport with ignorance, much more than with a state of instruction.

It now remains to inquire with regard to the state of primary education among us as compared with other nations—and if it shall appear that we are not only deficient as compared with the need of our population, but as compared with what has been realized in other countries, the question will naturally present itself—in what manner may this deficiency be best supplied?

SECTION VI.

ON THE COMPARATIVE STATE OF POPULAR EDUCATION IN GREAT BRITAIN, ON THE CONTINENT, AND IN THE UNITED STATES.

THE friends of national education have shewn a strong disposition during some years past to regard the government systems of primary instruction in Germany, particularly in Prussia, as a model eminently deserving imitation. On the Continent, it is not peculiar to the experience of the present generation that the superintendence of popular instruction should be an affair of government. In Prussia, in all the states of Germany, and in many others, this usage has prevailed imperceptibly, until it has assumed the form of a complete system. In 1769, Frederic the Great issued a law, which bound all parents in the Prussian dominions to send their children to the public elementary schools. Even that law, however, was merely confirmatory of preceding laws to the same effect. The same may be said of several other states.

In Prussia, in the year 1819, a minister of state was created under the name of the Minister of Public Instruction and of Ecclesiastical and Medical Affairs. The department of this functionary embraces the superintendence of the national education, the religious establishment, the secondary medical school, all establishments relating to the public health, and all scientific institutions, as academies, libraries, botanical gardens, museums—everything, in short, pertaining to the ad-

vancement of moral and intellectual culture among the people. This minister is the head of a council, or board, which is divided into three sections—the Ecclesiastical, the Medical, and the Educational. On the ecclesiastical board the majority are clerical, one being a catholic; and the section of public instruction, consisting of twelve persons, is composed chiefly of laymen. All the members of these sections are paid; each section has an establishment of clerks; and the expense of the entire department is something more than £12,000 per annum.

The territory of Prussia embraces ten provinces: each of these provinces is divided into regencies, corresponding to our counties; and another division, called circles, intervenes before you come to the communes—the division corresponding to our parishes. Nearly every province has its university. Each of these universities has its authorities named by itself. But all are under the superintendence of an officer appointed by the minister of public instruction. As the whole territory embraced by the monarchy has its central board, so has each province. The central board, having respect to the nation at large, has its appointment from the crown; the provincial boards have their appointments from the minister of public instruction. The provincial boards are in all respects the counterpart of the national, and act of course in subordination to it. In the sections of the provincial, as of the central board, everything is determined by a majority of voices. It should be added, that the jurisdiction of the educational section in the provincial boards, has respect to the higher instruction given in the universities, and to the secondary instruc-

tion given in the *gymnasia*, or grammar schools, as well as to the primary instruction adapted to the wants of the people generally.

With regard to this last kind of instruction, one object of this completely organized system is, to see that provision is made for it in every commune—or parish. Each parish is required to constitute its committee for this purpose, and that committee is empowered by the state to raise such contributions, and to adopt such other measures as may be necessary, in order that sufficient means of instruction may be provided for the children of the commune. This committee is further empowered to see that all parents send their children to the schools so provided, except as they can show that they are securing to them a good education elsewhere. If one parish be too small to institute a separate school, it may be joined with the next; if a parish be large enough to have more than one school, that course is always to be pursued; and in towns and cities the whole population may be provided for and superintended in this respect by the municipal authorities conjointly. The spirit of the system is—that the means of instruction shall be everywhere adequate to the wants of the people, and that the people shall be everywhere made to avail themselves of them.

But how has the question of religious liberty been disposed of in this arrangement? The following extracts from the Prussian law, on this subject, will show—
 “If a village, from its extent and population, or from difference in the religious persuasions of its inhabitants, has already two schools, and can provide for their maintenance, they shall on no account be united, espe-

cially if they be of different confessions of faith. On the contrary, separate schools shall be encouraged wherever circumstances permit.

“Difference of religion alone ought not, however, to be an obstacle to the formation of an association for a country school ; but in forming such an association of Catholics and Protestants, regard must be had to the numerical proportion of the inhabitants of each communion. If it be possible, there shall, in this case, conjointly with the head master professing the faith of the majority, be a second master, professing that of the minority.

“Jews scattered about the country may enjoy all the advantage of the school associations, but must not take part in the management. They must provide for the religious education of their children themselves.

“Whenever the union of two schools of different communions be judged expedient, it must take place by common agreement between the two parties. Moreover, in case of a union of this kind, or of the establishment of schools for various sects, provision must be made that each of these sects have within reach all that may be necessary for the religious education of the scholars belonging to it. And in order that no sect may have anything to fear, and that all it brings into the common fund may be secured to it, an authentic document shall be drawn up every year, setting forth the respective rights of each, and the particular terms of the association.

“If the members of small Christian sects choose to separate themselves from the association to which they naturally belong, and to establish distinct schools, they

shall be at liberty to do so, on condition of proving that they have means sufficient for the maintenance of such schools, and that they thoroughly fulfil the duties of the association to which they belong."*

It is also provided, that Jews may institute separate schools, but they are prohibited from receiving the children of Christian parents into such schools.

Such, then, is the machinery of the Prussian system, and such has been its provision with regard to the supply of masters, by means of its normal schools, and with regard to superintendence, that its success, so far as teaching what it proposes to teach is concerned, may be said to have become complete. The population of the Prussian monarchy, according to the last census, previous to 1831, was 12,726,823. Of this number, the proportion between the ages of seven and fourteen, which is the period allotted for attending schools, was, 2,043,030 : and the return of children actually in attendance was 2,021,421. So that leaving the remaining 21,609 to be made up from the elder boys attending the gymnasia, or classical schools, which alone in 1832 amounted to 17,000, and from the children of the higher classes who are educated at home, we have before us the remarkable fact, that in a country nearly as populous as our own, there are not only the means of education, in regard to the elementary matters usually taught in primary schools, extended to every human being, but we see every human being actually in possession of an education of that nature. It is scarcely needful to remark, that we discover nothing in the history of the most famous

* Cousin's Report. Translated by Sarah Austin, pp. 36, 37, 44.

nations of antiquity making any tolerable approach toward a state of things so extraordinary.

No school of this description is accounted complete, which does not teach, in some form, the Christian religion, the German language, the elements of geometry, and the general principles of drawing; and besides writing, arithmetic, singing, gymnastic exercises, and the simplest kind of manual labour, instruction is given in natural science, geography, general history, and particularly the history of Prussia. Such is the tuition which has been made to reach the level of a whole people in the largest Protestant monarchy of Europe, and with which that whole people have been made to be more or less familiar.

With respect to catholic Austria also, a similar report it seems may be made. So far back as 1820, the editor of the well-known Austrian newspaper, the *Observer*, could make the following appeal to his countrymen in regard to matters of fact on this point. "In all that regards the education of the lower orders of the people through national establishments of instruction, there is hardly a country in Europe that, in this respect, has the advantage of the Austrian States. The peasant in the country, the artizan in the town, must, throughout these dominions, have given due attendance at a school. Without a certificate of education and adequate proficiency, no apprentice is declared free of his craft; and without examination on the more important doctrines of religion, no marriage is solemnized. Even the military receive all competent instruction in the elementary branches of knowledge, through members who, for this purpose, are trained in the normal schools to the business of teach-

ing. In proportion as education is diffused is the possibility diminished of the out-breaks of a rude ferocity ; the more universal the instruction of the lower orders, the more harmless becomes the influence which the ill-educated can exert upon the sound judgment of those who thus virtually cease to be any longer a part of the populace."*

Such, it seems, are the sentiments which prevail on this subject even in catholic states, and which, as common to Catholics and Protestants, have extended a system similar to that of Prussia over Austria, Germany, Switzerland, Holland, and France. Russia also is entering upon the same course ; and even Egypt, under Mehemet Ali, is beginning to boast of her university and her elementary schools.

It is only since the accession of Louis Philippe that France has possessed her minister of public instruction, and her educational apparatus after the Prussian model. Her system, with the exception of being silent as to the compulsory attendance of the children, is, in all material respects, precisely that of Prussia ; and the number of masters already under the direction of the new minister, amounts to more than 10,000. The children in the primary schools of France in 1830, did not exceed 1,642,000 ; in eight years the new system increased the number to 2,650,000. Infant schools and adult schools have also been established under the direction of the French government, by means of which about 30,000 young children annually have been brought under instruction and oversight, and about 40,000 adults have

* Edinburgh Review, vol. 57, p. 506.

been taught to read each year of the first four years since the experiment was first made. The good effect of these exertions is becoming daily more perceptible. Previous to 1837, one-half of the whole number drawn for soldiers in France could not read. But that proportion is diminishing rapidly every year.

Still the popular mind in France, viewed generally, is in a state to afford little occasion for congratulation. In the largest towns, if we except Paris, it is supposed that one-third of the children, under twelve years of age, are unable to read ; and partly from the multitude who cannot read, and partly from the want of an adequate supply of cheap and suitable publications which might find their way into the hands of the humbler classes who can read, the intelligence of the body of the people in France is still, as it has ever been, in striking contrast with that of a privileged or limited class connected with the capital and public affairs. Germany is not more remarkable as bestowing upon all its people the power of reading, than as furnishing them with inducements, by means of cheap publications, to exercise the faculty when acquired.*

* " Arts and Artisans at Home and Abroad." By J. C. Symons, Esq., pp. 99, 100, 102. " At Rouen, I find that there has been great rivalry between the schools superintended by the Catholic ' Freres,' and those of the ' Instruction Mutuelle.' I visited both those establishments in Rouen in company with Mons. Paumier, a highly respectable French Protestant minister. I found no very poor children. In fact, the children evidently appeared, from their dress and cleanliness, to belong exclusively to persons in the easier classes of life. The exact same spirit of conflict goes on between these two sets of schools in France, as between the British and National School parties in England. In both, the priesthood desire and strive to subject all education to their exclusive control."—*Ibid.*

It is ascertained that in six of the most favourable states of the American union, the proportion of the population under instruction is one-fourth. In an average from eight of the countries the most advanced in this respect in Europe, the proportion is one-sixth. In France, as we have seen, the proportion of the people wholly untaught is lamentably great, varying between town and country from one-third to more than one-half; and in England, if we take the district of the five towns before mentioned as a sample, it must be remembered that, if we conclude, as I think we are warranted to do, that a sixth of the whole population are under instruction, the word instruction, as relating to the eight states on the continent, is to be understood as referring to the full training of the regular day schools, while with us the numbers of the taught are made up of all who come under instruction in any form, from the lowest dame school, or mere Sunday instruction, upwards—not more than a fourth of the entire number being attendants at the elementary day schools designed for the working classes. If we compare ourselves, accordingly, on this point, with the states of Europe, or with the states of the American union, it is manifest that, if there are some states on both sides the Atlantic, in regard to which we take a marked precedence, there are others—and a much greater number than our vanity might have prompted us to suppose—to whom we must at once surrender that honour. Not only do we fail to place the same number under instruction, but in the amount and quality of the instruction given we fail much more than in the number of the taught, few being educated in our elementary schools in so good a degree, so far as

the usual elements of school learning are concerned, as in the schools of the same class among the more strictly educated communities both of the old world and the new. "Activity, intelligence, self-denial, and prudence," say the Commissioners on the condition of the Handloom weavers, "are the results of good education, and we lament to say that few of the labouring classes in the British islands have received, or are receiving, a good education, or have the means of obtaining one. The first element of a good education—an adequate supply of good schoolmasters—is wanting. The supply of schools, though very far exceeding that of good masters, is lamentably deficient. And a still more painful deficiency is the want of will, or of means, or of both, on the part of parents, to give to their children the benefits, such as they are, of the existing schools."*

SECTION VII.

ON THE MEANS OF PROMOTING POPULAR EDUCATION, AND
ON THE PRUSSIAN SYSTEM IN RELATION TO THAT
OBJECT.

IN the preceding sections we have glanced sufficiently for our purpose at the state of popular intelligence as derived from primary school-instruction in our agricultural, as compared with our manufacturing districts; and in our country generally, as compared with other countries. We have seen that in this comparison the

* Report, p. 119.

scale turns "considerably on the side of the citizen and the artizan, as compared with the farmer and the peasant, but that it does not turn in favour of England generally, as compared with several states in the American Union, and with a still greater number in Europe.

The question now arises, in what manner may this manifest want, as regards primary school instruction, be best supplied? The answer of many—and of not a few among the warmest and most enlightened advocates of popular education, would seem to be, that the only effectual remedy against this evil must be in the adoption, on the part of the British government, of the substance of the Prussian system. Among our statesmen, the Conservative and the Liberal seem to have been to a great extent agreed in this conclusion—the former from their disposition to regard the character of the people as a matter which should always be subject in as great a degree as possible to the moulding hand of the government; and the latter, from their confidence in the ultimate triumph of intelligence, through whatever channel obtained. Both parties appear to have looked on this subject less comprehensively and carefully than might have been expected; and were their favourite system adopted, either entirely or in such degree as they seem to desire, they would probably reap from it a kind of fruit that would be by no means acceptable to them.

We do not scruple to say, that we look with much misgiving on the Prussian education system, and that we do so in part, on account of the relation in which it stands to a scheme of government which has superseded all liberty, civil and religious.

We have not been inobservant of the tone and air with which some liberal politicians have disposed of this objection. We know how easy it is to affect pity for the weakness of people who have come to the sagacious conclusion, that there can be no good thing connected with an arbitrary government, because there are many bad things connected with such governments. In answer to this imputation we would crave permission to say, that we do not by any means intend to question the assumption that such governments have their good as well as their evil. This is no more than may be asserted in respect to everything social which has obtained any lengthened toleration among men. But it has hitherto been too much the manner of despotic governments to make a bad use even of what is in itself good. It is not impossible that state education, in the ages to come, may be accounted an object of statesmanship in quite as great a degree as state religion has been in the ages past ; and with this possibility, even as a bare possibility, in view, we venture to ask whether there be not some danger lest this new means of power over the popular mind, should become only another instrument of arbitrary rule, after the manner of the old, being used as a coadjutor of the old, in these disjointed times, or where that might not be practicable, being raised into its place ? If national religions, in the hands of bad men, have become so often little better than so many mainsprings of state policy, and engines of oppression, may not national education be perverted after the same manner ? It may be that school instruction is somewhat less liable to such abuse than direct religious instruction ; but is it nothing that the main plea against distrust should be,

that the amount of mischief, in the case of bad management, is not likely to be quite so great in the one case as in the other, while both may be made to bear upon vitiated notions of human duty, and while both are found to set up the same arbitrary species of machinery, which may not only serve its own evil purpose, but may operate as a precedent, so as to give facility to the accomplishment of a thousand evil purposes beside ?

The Prussian military system, in common with the Prussian educational system, presents to the eye of the stranger the appearance of an elaborate and finished mechanism. Both, also, are in strict keeping with the whole framework of the government ; and the results of both, when viewed in certain lights, would seem to be most successful. The army of Prussia is the model of discipline and splendour ; and the instruction given to its people is so general, and of such amount, as to have created an era in the history of European society. But to judge of these results wisely, we must do more than glance at them ; we must make them the subject of scrutiny ; we must ascertain what they have cost ; we must endeavour to form a sober estimate concerning their general tendencies.

Thus much is certain, the power presiding over all this machinery is one, and by that one power, the whole is made to serve one object—the ascendancy of a single will, and the utter extinction of civil and religious freedom, except as enjoyed from the sufferance of that will. The civil power, as being of this character, finds its natural ally in the sword ; but the national religion, and the national education, are made to be alike tributary to its object. In Prussia, the government is everywhere,

and supreme in everything,—in the civil and the military, in trades and professions, in the religion of the old, and in the schooling of the young. As a theory, it assumes that the only manhood is with the governing. It contemplates an endless pupilage in the state of the governed. It does not devolve upon the state the wholesome exercise and manly responsibilities of self-government, but covers the land with paid functionaries—functionaries created solely by the royal pleasure, and altogether dependent on that pleasure. The government everywhere is an instrument in the hands of the king. It is nowhere a power emanating from the people.

In common with all such governments, it inflicts a large class of injuries on the national character, even when administered by kings of the better class. But all history shows, that it is in the nature of such governments to produce bad kings, and thus to ensure the abuse of this large power, rather than the use of it. The polity in respect to which it is pre-eminently important that the king should be a good man, is the polity in which the tendencies to make him a bad man are pre-eminently powerful. We say at once, that we loathe this species of government, and we cannot avoid the suspicion, that a scheme of education which has been made to harmonize so completely with the arbitrary where it exists, may be made to facilitate the introduction of the arbitrary where it does not exist. But in countries where the authority of government, or the power of ruling classes, are already such as often to place all popular liberty in great peril, nothing could be more natural, than that such an augmentation of the machinery and power of government as would be neces-

sary to set up the Prussian scheme of education should be regarded as an experiment by no means without hazard.

It has been the fashion for some time past to be loud in the praise of Germany. Prussia, especially, has been thus distinguished. Her genius, her learning, her social economy, her educational system, and her military system, all in their turn have become the subject of high eulogy. Much of this applause has no doubt been well bestowed. But much of it has been, as we suspect, inconsiderate and ill-placed; and as popular sentiment is never more likely to take the course upon which it is urged, than when that course is one which appears to be sustained by adequate experiment, it may be well to afford space in this section for a few observations on the real nature and tendencies of the institutions of that model kingdom. We regard the good realized by those institutions as greatly overrated, and the mischiefs perpetuated or originated by them as greatly overlooked.

Prussia is a territory comprehended under one name, but it is by no means the home of one people. Its different departments have passed from one hand to another, by heritage or conquest, through a long period, each petty sovereign being sufficiently powerful to give much of the impress of his own character to the character and habits of his people. In the history of these provinces or states, it has been the work of chance to bring them together, and a work of the same agency to put them asunder. When separate, they were of course strangers to any nationality of spirit; and when united, it was in a manner which tended little to make them feel as the

people of one nation. This want of unity in feeling, was a natural consequence of the want of unity in so much beside. In the times of the great Frederick, the only bond of union was the sword, and the only genius of the nation seemed to be that embodied in its military discipline. Its great use was to supply soldiers, and to be occupied as an extensive barracks. Its civil government was only another branch of its military power. In its discipline, obedience to the king was in the place of the love of country. Men were counted as so much machinery, as such they were to obey, as such they were to be used, and as such were they reckoned when they were worn out or destroyed. War was truly a game, and Prussia seemed to exist that her king might play at it.

In this sameness of passive subserviency, there was little to make a people one who had not been so before. Thus it continued until the wars of the French Revolution. Until then, the battles which had been fought, had been, for the most part, between the military serfs of one state, and the same class in another. Since the fall of the feudal system, the soldiery of the continent had been almost entirely of that description. The main exception to this rule was in the case of some who took part in the religious wars consequent on the Reformation, and in the case of "the immortal six thousand," sent by Cromwell to the aid of Louis XIV. But the soldiers of the French Revolution, in common with those of the English Commonwealth, were men governed by motives, more than by mere usage ; by strong inward passion, more than by the external pressure of a hard destiny ; by a lofty pride and ardent love of country, more than by a drilled habit of submission to

the stern pleasure of a military chief. The shock between armies thus differently constituted revealed an unwelcome secret. It became manifest that the men who go to the battle-field from choice, acquit themselves there after another manner than the men who go to it from necessity. The oldest and shrewdest heads engaged in military command were obliged to admit, that, contrary to their venerated theory, soldiers who could reason were capable of much braver things than soldiers who could not; and that men who had taken to the sword in favour of an object which had enlisted their own passions, and which was regarded as embracing their own interests, were really soldiers of a higher class than the men who had become such as mere mercenaries, or to subserve the pleasure of a leader. Nor was it to be denied, that, from some cause or other, an intimate connexion seemed to subsist in the case of this new race of soldiers, between a sense of freedom and a love of country; and that men animated by these new impulses, were generally more than a match as opposed to men who were devoid of them.

Since that day many attempts have been made to provide against a defect which then proved so disastrous. But all these attempts have been superficial, partial, timid, and, in the main, ineffectual. In Prussia, the old regular army has given place to a species of national guard. Every able-bodied Prussian, between the age of twenty and twenty-five, is obliged to serve three years in the ranks of this new standing army. Scarcely the least exemption from this obligation is allowed on the ground of station, fortune, or profession. From this service the men pass into the first, and, by age after-

wards, into the second division of the army of reserve, which is called out for exercise a fortnight, and sometimes a month in the year. Thus, in Prussia, every man is a soldier, and the whole country is as a camp. Standing armies upon the old plan—the plan which made men soldiers exclusively, as matter of vocation, and for life, still exist in Russia, Austria, France, and England; but the other states of Europe, as they adopted their old military system from Prussia in the age of Frederick the Great, so have they adopted their new system from the same kingdom since the peace of 1814.

Much may be said in praise of this new policy, but its oversights are more material than its wisdom. It is common with such of our military men as have witnessed the splendour and evolutions of the Prussian army on a field-day, to become ardent in their expressions of admiration. It may be regarded, also, by the humane, as a favourable circumstance, that the army which presents this imposing spectacle, is adapted, from its constitution, to defensive war only, and not to wars of aggression. It may be accounted a further advance in civilization, that of the men who fill the ranks of that army none are given up to the life of the soldier, the military character being only partially grafted upon the civil, the former being occasional, the latter being permanent. Above all, it may be thought, that a monarch who places arms after this manner in the hands of all his subjects, has done everything necessary to make the people the arbiters of their own cause.

But these considerations do not include the whole case. Prussia is so situated that her existence depends on her being a great military power; and as her armies

in the last century, and at present, have been equally objects of admiration, we do not see why the signal superiority displayed by the comparatively raw troops of the French republic, might not be followed by displays no less signal, and from quarters whence they are as little expected. This force, until then the envy of Europe, became as stubble before the revolutionary outbreak of the eighteenth century, and we see not why the calculations of the far-sighted in such matters may not be again equally confounded. The fact that the army of Prussia is adapted to defence only, must always operate to render her almost powerless in matters of negotiation; and the idea of rendering the military profession general, and at the same time subordinate to the civil, is as old as the feudal system, and may, indeed, be traced to the ancient republics. The fact, also, that the men of Prussia are all men with arms in their hands, is no doubt favourable to their being mildly treated by their sovereigns, and might conduce to the preservation of liberty if they were possessed of it; but it is plain from experience, that there is no necessary connexion between the fact that the people are thus armed, and their being possessed of the purpose, the will, or the feeling, necessary to work out a system of freedom for themselves. It is not in the nature of military discipline to generate liberty. Its tendencies, for the most part, are the other way. But while it is barren of good in that form, it is productive, in the case of Prussia, of many evils in other forms.

The law which requires three of the best years in the life of every man, and a fortnight or a month of every year afterwards, to be given wholly to military occu-

pation, is not only a law virtually imposing a heavy pecuniary tax upon the community, amounting to considerably more than ten per cent. upon the labour of every operative from the age of twenty to sixty, but is a law which must be very unfavourable to eminent skill in any species of handicraft, and, above all, to the formation of those regular and moral habits, on which the well-doing of men in their civil occupations and relations so greatly depend. An army provided after this manner may seem to be provided economically, but it is in fact much more expensive than an army sustained as among ourselves ; and its effect on the civil and moral habits of the people is much more injurious. It diverts attention from civil pursuits at a juncture when attention to them is of the greatest importance, and it exposes the moral susceptibilities to peculiar temptation at a season in which temptation is the most difficult to withstand.

It is not too much to say of such a people, that they can never become a great commercial power. Their usages are opposed to their ever becoming either producers or consumers on a scale adequate to that end. The interruptions occasioned by military duty, and the coarseness inseparable from a military life in the ranks, are scarcely compatible with nicety and eminence in art. Intervals of military occupation are not only so much taken away from time, they are so much taken away from aptitude—aptitude as regards artistic skill, and as regards moral habit.

It should be observed, also, that countries in which armies are constituted after the Prussian model, must always have the greatest reason to shrink from the ap-

proach of war. In such states every soldier is a citizen, and a field of battle would be sure to send the sorrows of bereavement thickly through all ranks—the highest and the most virtuous being sharers in the calamity, in as great a degree as the lowest and most dissolute.

On the whole, then, we see little to covet in this feature of the Prussian policy. We admit that it presents a somewhat imposing aspect of unity, but it is the unity of mere machinery, and of such machinery as can never serve to educe a national spirit, or to form the groundwork of a national greatness. Such, indeed, appears to be the feeling of the Prussians themselves, and they have in consequence been looking for some time past to the great commercial combination, known under the name of the German League, as an expedient better adapted to bind them together as one people, by creating among them, more strongly than any of their existing institutions are found to do, a feeling of common interest.

But here, also, their path is beset with difficulties. With all their military impediments, they have to compete with countries which know little or nothing of such distractions and hindrances. It is the wish of their king that they should be distinguished by a prosperous home trade, and by a vigorous foreign commerce. But they must be soldiers, and they must be the passive instruments of his pleasure, subject in every movement of person and property to a most meddling and vexatious oversight from his all-pervading will. Such things are incompatible. Even kings cannot supersede that old law which requires that the means shall precede the end. In our time, the men who are to excel in manufactures

and commerce, must be left to the undivided prosecution of their object. Traffic can never be really prosperous, except as left open to a large measure of freedom. In this respect, as in others, it is in vain to expect that subjects will acquit themselves like men, under a government proper only to children. But it is the common infirmity of kings to flatter themselves that they will be permitted to reap as they have not sown. They would fain realize all the advantages of freedom, in the character and circumstances of their people, without ceding the immunities of freedom. The sovereigns of Prussia have still to learn that such expectations are vain : but time is fast urging this lesson upon them. In this respect, the German League is a most important movement, inasmuch as it promises to raise up the commercial power as an antagonist to the arbitrary and the military. Such, however, is the state of Germany, that some generations must pass before the objects of this league can be in any great measure realized ; and when they are realized, it will be at the cost of almost everything distinctive of the existing German institutions.

But our objection to these institutions as they now exist, is not confined to the impediments, the loss, and the moral mischiefs which they occasion. We look on them with special apprehension on account of the passiveness which they require on the part of the people, and on account of their plausible adaptation to enforce and perpetuate the submission which they enjoin. They not only assume that the sovereign must be the only competent source of wisdom and goodness, but they place a machinery in his hand, so various and comprehensive, as to enable him to act in the full spirit of that

wretched fiction. The French Revolution swept away the aristocracy of France, and with it almost everything deserving the name of aristocracy in continental Europe. It thus did for monarchy in Europe, what the wars of the Roses did for monarchy in England—placing it in independence of the bands of nobles by whom it had been so often curbed and humbled. The kings of Europe just now, are in the Tudor period of their history—the Stuart age is to come! During this interval, the king, and the ministers of the king, are everything, and the nobility and the people must submit for the time to the powers that be.

With a view to secure this submission, the Prussian system covers the land with government functionaries—functionaries in every place, and for everything. Strange to say, the first example of this many-handed policy was supplied by the democrats of Paris. All the provinces, departments, and communes of France were thus marked out and occupied at the time of the Revolution. Government agents had their place everywhere, and from that time, whatever might be the department occupied by these personages, whether having respect to religion, law, education, or tax-gathering, they have all served the office of a paid police, being ever ready to uphold the power from which they have happened to receive their appointment, or to which they may be looking for the continuance of office. Patronage has become, in this manner, an alarming element of government power. We thus see, that the supervision exercised in former times—first by the king, and then by the nobility variously located through the territory subject to their sway, is now exercised by the sovereign

alone, through the medium of a host of sycophant stipendiaries who do his bidding. According to this new theory, no confidence is to be reposed in local wisdom or patriotism. Nothing material is to be entrusted to the governed, but everything is to be moved and directed by the centralized power of the governing.

We often flatter ourselves that the nations of Europe are much more enlightened now than they were some centuries since, but judging from these appearances, one might conclude that they were never more removed from competency to self-government than at present. In this new experiment in European policy—the experiment of an educated despotism—the king is not only the head of the body-politic, but, strictly speaking, is the only member in it possessing a proper vitality. It scarcely need be said that real social health can hardly belong to any state subject to institutions of this nature. But almost everything in the institutions of Prussia is based upon this principle. This is as true of its system of education as of any part of its policy. Schools and schoolmasters are created at the royal pleasure. They form a mighty engine, placed wholly at the service of the king, and are no more designed to create independence, or social manhood, than the composition of the Prussian army.

It should be stated, perhaps, that the precedent afforded during the heat of the revolutionary period in France, to the policy which centres everything, after this manner, in the government, owed its origin, in great part, to the law of self-preservation—a plea which cannot be urged in favour of those sovereigns who have acted upon the same meddling, jealous, and servile principle in more tranquil times.

The question now arises—do we see so much good in the results of the Prussian system of education, as to render it expedient that we should, for the sake of that good, incur the hazard of recognising those principles of government on which that system is manifestly founded? We answer, that we do not find in those results any such good as would warrant our making such an experiment, and that upon few subjects is there greater delusion prevalent than in regard to the effects which a system of that nature is adapted to produce. An intelligent traveller, who has been at much pains to ascertain the real state of society in Prussia, has not hesitated to state that, “in true moral social education, the Prussian people, from the nature of their government and social economy, necessarily stand lower than the lowest of our own unlettered population. The social value or importance of the Prussian arrangements for diffusing national scholastic education has been evidently overrated, for now that the whole system has been in the fullest operation in society upon a whole generation, we see morals and religion in a more unsatisfactory state in this very country than in almost any other in the north of Europe: we see nowhere a people in a more abject political and civil condition, or with less free agency in their social economy. A national education, which gives a nation neither religion, nor morality, nor civil liberty, nor political liberty, is an education not worth having. If to reason, judge, and act, as an independent free agent, in the religious, moral, and social relations of man to his Creator and to his fellow men, be that exercise of the mental powers which alone deserves the name

of education, then is the Prussian subject a mere drum-boy in education, in the cultivation and use of all that regards the moral and intellectual endowments of the man, compared to one of the unlettered populace of a free country. The dormant state of the public mind on all affairs of public interest ; the acquiescence in the total want of political influence or existence ; the intellectual dependence on the government or its functionaries, in all affairs of the community ; the abject submission to the want of freedom or free agency in thoughts, words, or acts ; the religious thralldom of the people to forms which they despise ; the want of the influence of the religious and social principle in society—all justify the conclusion that the moral, religious, and social condition of the people was never looked at or estimated by those writers who have been so enthusiastic in their praises of the national education of Prussia. The French writers took up the song from the band of Prussian pensioned literati of Berlin, and the English from the French writers ; and so the song has gone round Europe, without any one taking the trouble to inquire what this educational system was producing ; whether it had elevated, as it should have done if genuine, the moral, religious, and social position and character of the Prussian people, as members of civilized society, having religious, moral, civil, and political rights and duties to enjoy and to perform.

“ It is to us in England, with our free institutions and individual free agency in all things, an inconsistency scarcely conceivable, that a government should give the means, nay, enforce the acquirement of the means, yet

punish and suppress the use and exercise of the means it gives—should enforce education, yet deny the use and exercise of education in the duties of men, as social, moral, religious, thinking, self-acting beings. But this is the consistency of arbitrary, uncontrolled rule, and of the *juste milieu* principle of government, by which it seeks to continue its power. This is the government of functionaryism and despotism united, endeavouring to perpetuate itself by turning the education of the people, and the means of living in the case of a great body of civil functionaries placed over them, into a machinery for its own support.”*

* Laing's Notes of a Traveller, on the Social and Political State of France, Prussia, Switzerland, Italy, and other parts of Europe during the Present Century, pp. 230—233. I am tempted to cite another passage from this writer, whose highly instructive volume I would earnestly commend to the attention of my readers. “The voice of history in praise or reproach of kings is not heard amidst the whispers of courtiers and the hurras of armies. Her note comes to the ear of posterity from the cottage and the foot-path of the common man. The upper and the educated classes in Prussia live upon the industry of the people entirely, by the appointments under the government, either as military officers, civil functionaries, clerical or educational officials; and if they derive their living direct from the people, and not from the hand of the government, still they derive the privilege to exercise this means of living, be it in the law, in medicine, in trade, or any branch of industry, from the constituted authorities. These classes are loud enough in their adulation of the government of the late king, and of the social economy of Prussia—of its military system, its educational system, its functionary system, and of all that emanates from the higher powers. No wonder. They are strangers to individual free agency in society, and they hold their appointments and means of living, and look for their bread, or that of their children, from the hand of government. Their voice alone is heard in the literary world, on Prussian education, religion, social economy and affairs, and their shout is one shout of praise. But the future historian of this age, judging from purer sources, from facts and

No test perhaps is so certain, with regard to the social and domestic virtues among a people, as that supplied by their condition in the matter of female chastity. In this respect, Prussia, it seems, stands lower than any other protestant community in Europe. From returns made in 1837, it appears that of the females between the age of sixteen and forty-five, one in every seventy-five had been the mother of an illegitimate offspring. Such incidents, also, belong to families of the middle class in Prussia, in a degree unknown among ourselves, little being thought of an occurrence there, which in Scotland or England would be felt as a wide family disgrace for a generation to come. It will perhaps occur that in this fact we see no unnatural consequence of the three years' military life assigned to every young man in Prussia. Even in the matter of honesty, it seems, if so unsuspicious a witness as Prince Pukler Muskau may be credited, the comparison of Prussia as the best educated country in Europe, with some others as the worst, would not be more to the credit of the former. The disclosures recently made concerning the immoralities practised by a religious sect called Muckers, immoralities embracing great numbers, and to which some of the most educated and considerable persons were parties,

principles, will regard the Prussian social economy established by the late monarch as an attempt, now that the power of the sword and of brute force in civilized communities is gone, to raise up an equally despotic, irresponsible power of government, by enslaving the habits, mind, and moral agency of the people, through an educational, military, and religious training, and a system of perpetual surveillance of functionaries over every man, from his cradle to his grave. The attempt will probably fail, because it involves inconsistencies. It is a struggle of contradictions," pp. 215, 216.

are such as were never known to disgrace the history of religious extravagance in this country.*

This course of things is natural. It would be strange if either morality or religion were found to be in a healthy state as the consequence of being placed within trammels so much opposed to their natural development. The king who must be in this sense the father of his people, will soon find that he has more work upon his hands than he can well manage. By an edict of 1834, the late king made it an offence to conduct religious worship in any place beside a church, even in the form of a prayer meeting. In the church, also, the length and manner of the service, and on fast days, and particular occasions, even the text of the preacher, are determined by authority. Until 1817, the eight or nine millions of Protestants in Prussia were divided into two bodies—the Lutheran, and the Reformed or Calvinistic churches. In that year the king ordered a new ritual to be prepared, for the purpose of uniting these two churches into one, and on a given day the royal example was pleaded with the people from the pulpit as a reason why they should conform to the new rubric, and partake of the sacrament in the manner which it prescribed. Out of 8950 congregations, 7750 became obedient. It is true some persons ventured to remonstrate, and several hundreds of Silesians chose to embark, after the manner of our own pilgrim fathers, to America, rather than abandon the opinions and forms which had been handed down to them by their predecessors; and on

* Laing's Notes of a Traveller, &c. &c., pp. 215, 216.

the accession of his present majesty, some three thousand persons are said to have been pardoned as parties who were suffering on account of their political or religious opinions. Still the object of the monarch was accomplished, at least so far as his own time was concerned.

But the end is not yet. If the Protestants of Prussia have been passive, the Catholics have not so proved : and the effect of these strong Erastian proceedings has been to raise a Catholic Ireland within the limits of that kingdom, and to place the adherents to a system of spiritual despotism, in the unnatural position of being the stern advocates of civil and religious liberty.

In regard both to politics and religion, the effect of this intrusive and harsh policy has been such as might have been expected. Extremes have produced extremes. Amidst the general passiveness and servility, you may trace, here and there, a strong passion for liberty, partaking not unfrequently of that tone of extravagance, which, even in the case of the wise, is often generated by oppression. While in respect to religion, the subserviency which allows everything on that subject to be disposed of by the sovereign, with as little questioning as the orders relating to a court ceremonial, is known to be allied with a spirit so much of another complexion, that it is no longer from France, but from Germany, that the publications are issued, which strike most directly and injuriously against the distinguishing doctrines, and even against the credibility of divine revelation.

We see much to admire in the learning and genius of Germany. We have seen much also to respect in the

eminent acquirements, and much to love in the fervent piety of many among her clergy. But we must confess that the more we look beneath the surface of the very scientific machinery which her institutions exhibit, in order to ascertain the results produced by it, the less are we disposed to encourage an imitation of Prussian policy in Great Britain. Reading, writing, and arithmetic, are of some worth, but they may be purchased at a price above their value. They are important parts of education, but they do not include the whole, nor the parts of it which are most important. It is no doubt true, that our artisans are in general much less educated in these respects than the artisans of the continent. Their manners in consequence are more coarse, more debased by tendencies towards mere sensual indulgence, and altogether they are less self-governed, and less easy to govern by those who employ them. We of course deeply regret that our countrymen should suffer when brought into such comparison. It is admitted, however, that in proportion as the English artisan has been tolerably educated, this disparity always ceases to appear, and that he rises not merely to the level of his fellows in other nations, but above them.

Education is a word of large meaning. It should not only teach men what they owe to other people, but what they owe to themselves. It should dispose them to respect what is due to others, but it should make them sensible that they have claims of their own. It should discourage insubordination and rudeness, but it should inculcate self-respect. It should prevent men from doing wrong, but it should give them a tone of mind as little compatible with the endurance of wrong,

as with a disposition to inflict it. It should inculcate its lessons of obedience, but not in such manner as to preclude the feeling of individual responsibility. It should not merely teach men how to write their names, and how to cast accounts, but how to be observant of the morally expedient, the honourable, the virtuous, and the devout,—of all matters bearing upon the formation of character, and the relations and duties of life.

We scarcely need say, that it is not in the nature of an arbitrary government to institute a system of education that should carry with it tendencies of this description. In this respect, Berlin is the copyist of Peking, more than of New England. Its object has been stationariness, not movement—to subdue men to passiveness, not to elevate them to liberty and independence. We lament that primary school instruction in Great Britain is not more general, and that it is not of a higher quality. But what is wanting among us in the way of direct school instruction, is in great part supplied by the more vigorous temper of society. Our free institutions, not merely as they come before us in the proceedings of the hustings and at St. Stephen's, but in those of every municipal body, and especially through the liberty of the press, and the liberty of worship, contribute to render our country a scene of constant mental training, in which inability to read is everywhere made to bear its reproach, and in which moral and religious questions, in every shade and form are brought into such constant agitation, as to call the mind of our people into an almost ceaseless action in relation to them. The intelligence thus imparted, and the sharpening of the faculties thus induced, are of a higher practical

value than anything which school training can contemplate, and among the classes which make up the gathering in this great school-house, the Englishman has his place from his earliest youth, and to the end of his days.

We may add, also, that if the schoolmaster does much less with us than in some other countries, there is good reason to think that the parental relationship does more. The public school is an evil in proportion as it is allowed to supersede domestic oversight. The eye of a mother is a more potent means of discipline than any that can be devised in connexion with systems of public education. The technical may be acquired at a primary school; but the moral and religious, if acquired in youth, must be acquired, in nearly all cases, at home, or in the Sunday school. In this country the schoolmaster has his office to perform, but with us the domestic circle, and society at large, are the great educators. What we learn at school we retain in common,—the formation of character comes afterwards, and results from the press, the pulpit, and the intercourses of life.

It is the absence of public spirit in Prussia which has devolved the whole business of education upon the government. It is the presence of that spirit in England which has disposed the people to take that labour upon themselves. Now it should be observed, that the good in this case is not confined to the instruction imparted, but embraces the intelligence and feeling with which it has been provided. Every such effort exhibits one form of our social feeling and usage, a form with which many more are in close affinity, and which, taken together, present an element of our national character, the loss of which would be poorly compensated by any amount of

wisdom that might be secured to our sovereigns, or to our ministers of state. It is the kind of effort natural to a people who have not learnt to consider their rulers only as men, and themselves as children. Proficiency comes from practice, and it is not only true that the more men are thus employed in serving their country, the more they become capable of serving it, but the more they are disposed to do so, and to do so from a generous love of country. In such feeling and habit we discern the indications of social qualities which the Prussian system supposes to be absent, and which that system will never create.

When it is remembered that nearly everything done in the cause of education in this country is done by the people themselves, and scarcely anything by their rulers, it will perhaps appear that the amount of instruction secured to the young in Great Britain is such as no other country, left in the same degree to its own intelligence and public spirit, would have been found to realize. Most grateful must it be to the eye of the Christian philanthropist to look abroad on the five towns adverted to in a preceding section, and to see some 8000 young persons giving the greater part of Sunday, after the employment in which most of them have been engaged during the week, to the labour of teaching some 50,000 children, committed on that day to their care—teaching them, moreover, those lessons of wisdom which are eminently adapted to fit them for the happiness of this world and a better. One of the greatest evils that could befall us as a people, would be any change which should tend to supersede, or in any way to disturb or discountenance these free and inde-

pendent efforts, whether relating to Sunday schools or day schools.

But more, we think, might be done from the public treasury, in aid of popular education, without bringing any such disastrous consequence along with it. We have our Committee of Council of Education, as a centralized influence and authority in relation to this subject. We are willing to forget the inconsistency of her Majesty's present ministers in perpetuating that body, when we look to the high uses—uses irrespective of sect or party—to which its powers may be applied. Its object, as wisely determined by the late administration, is not to educate the people, but to assist the people in educating themselves. Its design is to encourage the building of school-rooms in neighbourhoods where they are most needed, by contributing toward the expense of such erections; and as the £30,000 per annum placed at the disposal of the committee for this object, is derived from the public treasury, honesty requires that it should be understood to be given toward so much of the intended education as does not interfere with conscientious differences on the matter of religion. In the National Schools, religion is taught agreeably to the forms of the Church of England; in schools on the British and Foreign system, it is inculcated under the direction of the local committee of each school—the design of the government grant being to assist in respect to the parts of elementary instruction concerning which all are agreed, leaving religious instruction, concerning which there is not the same agreement, to be determined by local preference, and to be conveyed according to the forms of the Established Church, or directly from the lessons of Scripture. But

the substance of the instruction to be communicated being thus understood, the appointment or dismissal of teachers, and the whole management of the schools thus assisted, is left in the hands of the public-spirited persons acting as a committee in the case of each school.

But would the continuance of these most wholesome local efforts be at all endangered if the principle of this grant were carried somewhat further—so far, we mean, as not only to facilitate plans for producing a more efficient order of teachers by means of good normal schools, but to assist, in certain ascertained cases, in the support of such teachers, as well as in the erection of buildings? Until something of this kind is done, it is hardly to be expected that adequate and suitable instruction will be provided in our large cities, and still less room is there to hope that such will be the case in the greater number of our rural parishes. Anything in the form of a compulsory local tax, as the means of providing primary instruction, we should regard as highly inexpedient. Ours are not times in which to impose new taxes on the poor, especially in that direct form. Nor is it enough, to secure to children the advantages of elementary education, that they should not be allowed to enter the factories until a certain age, inasmuch as private labour, commencing from an age which renders ignorance unavoidable, is an evil no less needing provision of that nature.

The great want appears to be, that education should be made more accessible, by means of a better supply of school-rooms, and still more by means of a better supply of schoolmasters; and that the instruction provided should not only be more ample and of better quality, but

that care should be taken to ameliorate the condition of the poor, so as to allow of their availing themselves of the means of education when provided; and to adjust our national institutions and usages, so as to cause them to operate, as far as may be practicable, in the manner of a bounty upon education, and as means of attaching disgrace to the want of it. Would there be anything unreasonable in a law which should require that every man should write his name as the condition of exercising the elective franchise? Would it be otherwise than just that a similar requirement should be exacted on all free admissions to places of public resort? Would the Factory Bill have been so much a failure in this respect if, in place of fixing the age at which children should be allowed to enter upon mill labour, it had required that girls should at least be able to read, and that the boys should be capable of reading and writing?

In no respect do the property classes in this country betray a greater want of sound worldly economy, than in leaving so large a portion of the labouring population in their present state of ignorance. After the statistical returns obtained on this subject from all parts of the United Kingdom, and made accessible to every one, it can no longer be questioned that ignorance in the humbler classes is the natural parent of poverty, pauperism, and crime. In 1837, of 1050 adult paupers in twelve union workhouses of East Kent, nearly five hundred could neither write nor read. In the same year there were 1675 adult paupers in twenty-two workhouses and in five incorporations, in Suffolk and Norfolk, of which number more than nine hundred were unable to read. These may be taken as fair samples of

the state of things in this respect through the counties of England at that time.

With regard to the connexion subsisting between popular ignorance, and the insecurity of property and life, the same decisive kind of evidence exists. Dr. Kay, when addressing the proprietors of the mineral property in Monmouthshire, in behalf of the Lords of the Committee of Council of Education, justly observed,—“ It cannot be the interest of a great body of wealthy proprietors, that the labourers should continue the prey of low moral habits, to a large extent, without religion, in gross ignorance, and consequently, the easy victims of the disaffected and of the emissaries of disorganizing doctrines. Nor can it be the interest of proprietors, who have so much wealth at stake, that the children of this population should grow up ignorant, irreligious, corrupted, and misled. My lords conceive, that the same motives which induce merchants and manufacturers to devote a portion of their annual profits to the insurance of the capital they employ in trade, ought to be sufficient (even without any reference to moral considerations of much greater dignity and importance) to deter sagacious men from leaving their wealth exposed to the dangers of popular tumults and secret violence, when a comparatively small annual expenditure, judiciously employed in introducing the elements of civilization and religion, would render society harmonious and secure.

“ The law, which secures the life of the most destitute and abandoned, at the expense of the property of the country, confers this great benefit, among other considerations, in order that property may be the more

secure. The principle has thus been recognised, that insecurity of life and insecurity of property are inseparable. Equally inseparable, in the opinion of their lordships, are the insecurity of property and that want of the power of useful self-guidance which is the characteristic of ignorance and irreligion among the labouring classes of the people.

“ Their lordships conceive, that to leave a population, receiving comparatively high wages, like that of Monmouthshire, without the means of acquiring knowledge for themselves, or of giving their children a useful religious education, is both improvident and peculiarly dangerous. It is dangerous, because high wages are weapons of self-destruction in the hands of men so uncivilized as to be incapable of resisting temptation to the abuse of spirituous and fermented liquors ; and because the habit of drinking in beer-shops and taverns is the first step in the neglect of domestic and social duties, and affords an opportunity to the emissaries of the disaffected to influence the population, of which opportunity they are, in periods of popular tumult, always ready to avail themselves. It is improvident, because the wages themselves would enable the population, with judiciously administered assistance and advice from the proprietors, to unite with their employers in supporting schools for the education of their children, and in establishing the means of cheerful and instructive intercourse among themselves.

“ These considerations are based on the comparatively low level of a wise foresight concerning the interests of the industry and trade of the district, which will be prosperous in proportion as capital is secure, and the

labourers are skilful, intelligent, steady, and industrious. Considerations of a higher character would suggest that property has its duties as well as its rights, and that to neglect the opportunity to promote the well-being of a dependent population, by refusing to furnish them with the means of self-improvement, is an evil resembling the neglect of a parent to train up his child in the way he should go, and implies the neglect of an obligation similar in character to the parental duty, though vastly different in importance.”*

Made familiar, as we now are, with the educational systems of the continent, in the Catholic no less than in the Protestant states, and under the most despotic governments in common with the most free, the expediency of popular education would seem to be no longer a matter open to debate ; and it is beginning to be much more generally admitted than formerly, that the instruction given even in elementary schools should be more comprehensive than has been usual in this country. On this subject we are happy in being able to cite the authority of the present bishop of London. “ Religion,” says his lordship, in a charge delivered to his clergy in 1834, “ ought to be made the groundwork of all education ; its lessons should be interwoven with the whole tissue of instruction, and its principles should regulate the entire system of discipline in our national schools. But I believe the lessons of religion will not be rendered less impressive or effectual by being interspersed with teaching of a different kind. The Bible will not be read with less interest if history, for example, and geography,

* Minutes of the Committee of Council, 1840-1, p. 17.

and the elements of useful and practical science, be suffered to take their turn in the circle of daily instruction. On the contrary, I am persuaded that the youthful mind will recur, with increased curiosity and intelligence, to the great facts, and truths, and precepts of Holy Writ if it be enlarged and enlivened by an acquaintance with other branches of knowledge. I see no reason why the education given to the poor should differ from the education of their superiors, more widely than the different circumstances and duties of their respective conditions in life render absolutely necessary. One thing is certain, and it is a very important consideration, that if we teach them the methods of acquiring one kind of knowledge, they will apply them to the acquisition of other kinds; if we sharpen their faculties for one purpose, they will be sure to use them for others. Some information on subjects of general interest many of them will undoubtedly seek to obtain; and it is plainly desirable that they should receive it from our hands in a safe and unobjectionable form. It is desirable also, that they should not be accustomed to consider that there is anything like an opposition between the doctrines and precepts of our holy religion and other legitimate objects of intellectual inquiry; or that it is difficult to reconcile a due regard to the supreme importance of the one, with a certain degree of laudable curiosity about the other. The experiment of mixing instruction in different branches of useful knowledge with scripture reading, and lessons on the truths and duties of Christianity, has been tried with success in the sessional schools of Edinburgh, by a zealous and able friend of the poor—Mr. Wood, to whose publications on the subject I would

refer you for further information. It has also been tried in more than one large parochial school in this diocese, and the results have been very encouraging. I am, therefore, desirous that additions should be made to the school catalogue of the Society for Promoting Christian Knowledge, adapted to supply materials for a more varied course of instruction than that which is ordinarily pursued in our schools."

Ten years have intervened since these intelligent observations were made public. It is to be regretted that so long an interval has passed, and that so little impression should seem to have been made by them. They point, however, in the right direction, and indicate the course which things will not fail to take in this respect.

We do well, as a nation, to retain the power of educating the popular mind, for the most part, in our own hands ; but we do ill to retain that power without duly remembering the responsibility which must go along with it. If disposed to cherish a wholesome jealousy with regard to any immediate interference on this subject on the part of government, the least to be expected from us is, that we should bestir ourselves to the utmost in order to shew that such interference is not needed.

CHAPTER VI.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO MORALS.

SECTION I.

ON THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN GREAT CITIES AS INCLUDING TENDENCIES UNFAVOURABLE TO MORALITY.

EVERY increase in wealth is so much increase on the side of indulgence—presenting, of necessity, so much temptation to the formation of habits which tend naturally to deterioration. It is thus with individuals in all such cases, and it is not less so with communities. The danger of our going wrong is always in proportion to the facilities and inducements which are held out on the side of doing so. As society advances, ruder modes of gratifying the appetites and passions are relinquished, but others, scarcely more favourable to morality, too often come into their place. Men become more capable of reflection, but the greater restraint which is laid upon irregular propensities by that means, is not necessarily so strong as the force which may act upon them in the form of new enticements. The consequences of this fact are momentous.

It is natural that the causes which give strength to an undue thirst after personal gratification, should give strength to all the selfish passions, and in the strength of those passions consists the essence of everything

immoral—of everything opposed to individual happiness and to the stability of nations. Henceforward the sobriety necessary to self-government is wanting. The greater good, which is remote, is habitually sacrificed to the lesser good, which is immediate. In this manner, the calculations of the selfish are always based on the arithmetic of folly. They are ever pregnant with disaster and failure, and as opposed to individual prosperity, the delusion involved in them cannot become prevalent, without proving adverse to the prosperity of communities, no less than of individuals, the former being made up from the latter. Men devoid of the self-denial necessary to a wise prosecution of their own interest, must not be expected to bring that difficult virtue into exercise with a view to the interest of others. The natural course of things, in such case, as regards all public feeling, is, that faction should become stronger than patriotism, and that men should acquire the habit of scrambling for themselves, heedless of their country, of justice, or humanity. Inspiration assures us, that “fulness of bread and abundance of idleness” carry with them the seeds of all mischief. It is thus that the bonds of nations have been loosened. While in their youth, and fully occupied in the forethought and effort necessary to surmount difficulty, they are, as we have elsewhere remarked, comparatively safe. It is when they become opulent and powerful, when they have built great cities, and when, as they think, they can afford to halt and luxuriate—it is then that sensuality, corruption, and ruin, may be feared !

We shall presently shew, that society in this more advanced state possesses eminent advantages, if its

appliances be only rightly employed. But it brings with it, as must be readily perceived, its own forms of danger. It may aim to substitute the pacific in the place of the warlike, and the reign of intelligence, order, and law, was to exclude alike barbarian violence and irresponsible prescription. But new perils may beset these new social combinations, so as to give them every appearance of failure. Whenever civilization has been greatly abused, so that the selfish is seen generally to take the place of the virtuous, it has ended, in this manner, by seeming to proclaim itself as an ill-judged or an ill-conducted experiment. In every such case, it has become manifest that man is a being of so much moral infirmity, that even by improving his social condition in the most eminent degree, if you diminish the amount of danger which previously beset him, you may expose him to new seductions, and seductions which, if not provided against, by special means, may cause his latter state to be as little enviable as the former. Hence, in the times which have now opened upon us, it is toward the dangers which are attendant on men as resident in cities, and especially in great cities, that the generous solicitude of the Christian, the patriot, and the philanthropist, will need to be especially directed. It is in such connexions that the good or evil of modern nations will be strongest, and be treasured up as the element of their preservation or destruction.

It will not be questioned, we presume, by persons who have bestowed any degree of reflection on the subject, that the standard of morality, so far as it respects some considerable portions of society, appears to reach its lowest point as you direct your attention from the smaller

towns to the greater. It is no doubt true that there is both a kind and a degree of intelligence and virtue existing in large cities, which will not be found among any scattered and rural population ; but it is no less true, that we should fail of finding in any such population the same amount of the more deliberate and matured forms of depravity. In great cities men possess the power of becoming strong—eminently strong, for good or for evil. The more you crowd men together, the more you expose the pure to the hazard of infection, and the impure to the danger of waxing worse and worse. Human nature is too prone to imitate the evil rather than the good ; and in great cities, the inducements to such a course occur with their greater frequency, and in their greatest force. In such places, there are recesses in which every abomination may be practised, and no eye that might deter from the forbidden indulgence be the witness. Nowhere else, accordingly, does man acquire such expertness in iniquity, and nowhere else has evil so large a space over which to diffuse its pestilential influence. In the populous city, this poison may be said to insinuate itself almost as through every vein. The contact with it is close and perpetual. It has its incipient stages for all grades—for the needy apprentice, and for the young in the noblest families. It has its modes of displaying itself so as to make its conquests in the shop of the artisan and in the palaces of royalty. Nearness and constancy of association, necessarily sharpen the powers of the understanding ; but in the history of minds so exercised, while shrewdness will generally come of itself, goodness will not, except as effort shall be made to realize it.

In great cities men may become offenders in almost every form with less probability of detection than elsewhere, and this fact has contributed powerfully to render such places the abodes of so much delinquency. In a neighbourhood where every man is known, where all his movements are liable to observation, and the slightest irregularity becomes a matter of local notoriety, a strong check is constantly laid upon the tendencies of the ill-disposed. In such connexions it is felt that should the law fail to punish, society will not. In the populous city, restraint of this nature is of course much less felt. There, accordingly, the unprincipled are often tempted to act as basely as their nature may prompt, on the presumption that they may do so without penalty or inconvenience. Such scenes become a kind of centre, to which the most worthless in all the provinces around almost instinctively betake themselves. The crowded capital is to such men as some huge and intricate forest, into which they plunge, and find, for a season at least, the places of darkness and concealment convenient for them. If such men possess wealth, the facilities there afforded to every sort of gratification will be a powerful attraction; while the men who are both necessitous and depraved, cling to such associations with the same tenacity, as holding out to them the only prospect of enriching themselves at the cost of others.

One form of the evil attendant on the spirit natural to great commercial cities may be perceived in the ease with which men learn to cherish the hope of realizing large fortunes, and in the excessive eagerness with which that object is in consequence pursued. In the great majority of cases, these fond hopes must end in disap-

pointment, and the disappointment can hardly come alone. Every instance of success in this form becomes to multitudes the occasion of laborious effort and high hope directed toward the same object. It may be that the exertions of this kind which end in failure are not without some good moral influence. But in proportion as men become intent on success, in that form, is the danger of their becoming less and less scrupulous in regard to the means which may conduce to it; and the bitter, the exasperating, the demoralizing effects of failure, may be expected to be great, in proportion as success has been the object of great solicitude and effort. In the ambition to become rich, as in the ambition to become powerful, we witness a manifestation of the same condition of human passion, and we see men exposed through all the stages of these passions to the same moral dangers. The objects are different, but the ill-regulated feeling, and its attendant perils, are the same. The passion, also, in both cases, is subject to the same species of disguise. The worshipper of power, if you will believe him, is distinguished from other men only by his greater measure of generosity and public spirit; and the veriest slave of mammon can readily persuade himself that his life has been a pattern of virtuous emulation and laudable industry. Bad passions are never so liable to become strong and pernicious, as when they are capable, demons as they may be, of taking upon them, after this manner, the form of an angel of light.

Such, then, is the danger attendant on that nearer and more ceaseless contact with evil into which men are brought as they become inhabitants of great cities ;

such is the licence to do evil which is afforded in those crowded dwelling-places, partly from their greater facilities in that respect, and partly from their greater promise of impunity ; and such is the perilous influence to which they expose the moral feeling generally, by reason of the passionate eagerness, in relation to the prizes of life, which it is their tendency to induce in the case of great numbers. The educated and the uneducated, the occupied and the unoccupied, the few who are rich and the many who depend on them—forming their households, or ministering to their gratification,—all are liable, more or less, to the influence of the same vortex.

Still, in forming our judgment with regard to the morality of great cities, both as compared with the population in each place, and as compared with the rural districts, great caution will be necessary if we would guard successfully against being misled. It is certain, that singularly exaggerated statements have been put forth on this subject, by well-meaning persons, who have been themselves deceived concerning it. When it is remembered that it has been well ascertained, that the women of known bad character, in London do not exceed 7000, while even very recently they have been described in print as amounting to 60,000, and even to 80,000 ; when it is remembered, also, that the common thieves of the metropolis are known to be little more than 3000, and that these have been described, not long ago, as numbering 30,000, it will be obvious that it becomes us to look on all reports on such matters with much misgiving, except as they are furnished upon

such authority as should entitle them to credit.* This number of delinquents, it must be borne in mind, is found among a population of nearly two millions : and much as we may deplore this amount of the immoral, the wonder, all things considered, is, not that it is so great, but rather that it is not greater. Nor would it have been restrained within such limits, in such circumstances, had not our great city been made the centre of a great moral power, wisely adapted to counteract the natural outbreaks of depravity.

Pictures of the most revolting description might, no doubt, be set forth, exhibiting the ignorance, the superstition, the vice, and the degradation, which have their home in too many sections of our metropolis ; exhibiting also the arts, the intercourse, and the profligacy of the common thieves who find their favourite haunts in Westminster ; and exhibiting the utter corruptness, the perverted talent, and the almost enviable daring of depredators, who all find their natural place and fellowship according to their respective vocations, from the runaway apprentice who is learning the art of picking pockets, to the accomplished gamester or swindler who appears in fashionable costume, and assumes, as he best may, the airs in keeping with it ; and from all these exhibitions of crime, as walking the streets, or revelling in secrecy, we might pass to the sights presented in our prisons, and we might conclude with shewing to how great a degree these evils affect both sexes, and to how

* Report of the Commissioners appointed to inquire as to the best means of establishing an Efficient Constabulary Force in England and Wales, pp. 13—15.

great a degree they acquire strength from the depraved state of the passions between them. But though all the pictures in this humiliating series should be faithfully taken from the state of society in London, it must be remembered that they would by no means set forth that society. The Newgate Calendar may belong to the history of London, but it is not that history. It is the exception, rather than the mass, which is thus putrid. If we place all the classes of delinquents in the metropolis together—those who are known to live by some one or other of the numerous practices which the law denounces as fraudulent, or who, as vagrants, or otherwise, are suspected of so living; and all, moreover, who are known to live, or suspected of living, by the wages of impurity, the aggregate number will be between 16,000 and 18,000—a number sufficiently lamentable, but that number, be it remembered, has to be counted from a population of nearly twice ten hundred thousand, leaving the delinquent, the impure, the vagrant, and even the suspected of all classes, to be made up from somewhat less than one person out of every hundred.*

These observations have respect to large cities generally, when not distinguished as places of any particular branch of manufacture. They apply to what is common to such cities as London, Liverpool, and Bristol, and not to what is peculiar to such places as Manchester, Nottingham, or Sheffield. In the places last named, and in the manufacturing districts generally, as the state of society is peculiar, it is to be expected that the tendencies to demoralization will be in some degree

* Report of the Commissioners, &c., pp. 13 et seq.

peculiar. Every new form of social existence must bring its evil along with its good. If we credit one class of writers, nothing can be more lamentable than the demoralizing influence of factories and workshops on all persons connected with them. If we listen to another class of informants, nothing can be farther from the truth than the substance of such representations. That the vices chargeable on our manufacturing population have been greatly exaggerated, and that the high moral qualities which belong to a large portion of them have been greatly overlooked, we have no sort of doubt. But though there is a large amount of good to be placed over against the evil, no informed and impartial man will pretend to say that the evil is not prevalent, and such as should be deeply deplored. Much depends, in this respect, on the character of the mill-owners, and much also on the locality in which the mill may be placed. Any strict moral superintendence of operatives by their employers, in large towns, is of course impracticable. But in villages, and in less populous districts, the greater number of masters are prompted by interest, or by a higher feeling, to be observant of the morals of their work-people. Dr. Taylor, in the volume recently published by him on this subject, has given a description of one of these factory settlements of the better class.

“I preferred visiting the cottages of Turton,” says our author, “to those of Egerton; the latter may be suspected to be something of a show-place. Its immense water-wheel is one of the wonders of Lancashire, and draws crowds of visitors. Few of them fail to be attracted by the neatness of the cottages in the village,

and hence the families of the operatives, being used to inspection, may be supposed in some cases to prepare for it. This is not the case at Turton, which lies out of the main lines of road, and is a secluded nook, which is not to be reached without some trouble. The principal village occupied by the operatives is named Banktop, from the circumstance of its being situated on the summit of the side of the ravine remote from Mr. Ashworth's dwelling. The situation, though open and airy, is not unsheltered; the cottages are built of stone, and contain from four to six rooms each; back premises with suitable conveniences are attached to them all. I visited the interior of nearly every cottage; I found all well, and very many respectably furnished; there was generally a mahogany table and a chest of drawers. Daughters from most of the houses, but wives, as far as I could learn, from none, worked in the factory. Many of the women were not a little proud of their housewifery, and exhibited the Sunday wardrobes of their husbands, the stock of neatly folded shirts, &c.; and one of them gave me a very eloquent lecture on the mysteries of needlework.

“As these cottages belong to Mr. Ashworth, I deemed it right to inquire how far the letting of them could be identified with the truck system. I was informed by the operatives that permission to rent one of the cottages was regarded as a privilege and favour; that it was, in fact, a reward reserved for honesty, industry, and sobriety, and that a tenant guilty of any vice or immorality would at once be dismissed. Mr. Ashworth was said to be very strict in enforcing attention to cleanliness, both of house and person, and in requiring the

use of separate sleeping apartments for the children of different sexes. It was sufficiently obvious, from the gossip I heard, that public opinion had established a very stringent form of moral police in the village, which superseded the necessity of any other. All were not merely contented with their situation, but proud of it; they contrasted their position with that of the operatives in mills working half-time, or where business had been suspended, and sometimes expressed a nervous alarm lest the continued depression of trade should at last reach Turton, and reduce its operatives to the condition of those in Bolton."*

In the town of Bolton, and in many similar localities, the aspect of things at all times is much less pleasing than in connexion with such comparatively rural establishments as those at Turton, and some others in the same neighbourhood, which have come under my own observation. In manufacturing towns, the absence of cleanliness and comfort from the dwelling of the artisan, is in general the too certain indication of a want of the religious or moral principle necessary to self-government. Some may be seen in a state of the most abject poverty, purely from want of the honest employment to which they would readily apply themselves; but others, and those not unfrequently the men who obtain the highest wages, have never been sufficiently moral to know how to secure to themselves the decencies and comforts within their reach. When vice obtains among operatives, it often does so in its coarsest

* Notes of a Tour in the Manufacturing Districts of Lancashire. pp. 27—30.

forms; and it is seen that habits of intoxication, when once submitted to, soon dispose their victims to the use of the most ardent stimulants. Nor are the manufacturing towns on the continent exempt from those exhibitions of human infirmity any more than our own. "The morality of French artisans," says Mr. Symons, "I was frequently assured by some of the most distinguished statistes of France, and also by persons like the prefect of the department of the Nord, and Mons. Dellesale, of Lisle, men practically and intimately acquainted with the working classes, depends greatly on their poverty. I am aware of the perverted use to which such an admission may be turned, but conducive as extreme poverty unquestionably is to vice, I am convinced that the highest paid artisans are usually the least virtuous. I have always found that high wages, without a proportionate mental training, were invariably attended with increased immorality, imprudence, and frequently with positive want."*

But that factory operatives, as a class, are more depraved than operatives in other trades,—or that operatives generally are more depraved, all things considered, than agricultural labourers, are points which we do not by any means concede.

The number of factory operatives, who come within the cognizance of the civil power as delinquents, is surprisingly small. Sir Charles Shaw read a paper to the statistical section of the British Association, which met in Manchester in the spring of the present year, entitled, "A Report of the Cases brought before the Police

* Arts and Artisans. 101—107.

of Manchester on Saturdays and Sundays, from the 22nd of January to the 15th of June, 1842." On those days the greatest number of irregularities or crimes are found to occur. The number apprehended during the period named, consisted of 440 males and 206 females. Of this number, 320 had been out of employment on an average nearly nine months previously, and of the 646 offenders not more than seventeen were factory operatives. This statement may be taken as a just shewing with regard to the comparative morality of that class of artisans.

We are satisfied, also, that the stories propagated in respect to the licentiousness obtaining among this class of persons, as consequent on the two sexes meeting together in such great numbers, are for the most part without foundation. Mr. Tufnel, a factory commissioner, who travelled in Lancashire, closely examined the rectors of St. John's and St. Paul's, Manchester, the chaplain of Manchester jail, and various dissenting ministers intimately acquainted with the factory population, on this point; and, as the result, has stated, that "the whole current of testimony goes to prove that the charges made against cotton factories on the ground of immorality are calumnies." From the whole of Mr. Tufnel's report, the conclusion would be, that the morals of the persons engaged in mills are quite as good as those of any other class of people, and that, during the twelve years previous to the date of this report, they had been materially improved by means of Sunday schools and otherwise. "Profligacy in the masters or overlookers of a mill may, perhaps must, lead to great immorality in those under them, but capitalists soon discover that licentiousness is

pernicious to their interests ; they are practically taught that the morality of their operatives is an essential element of their working value, and those who do not learn this lesson must soon find their way into the gazette. The chief cause of immorality in Manchester is not the aggregation in the factories, but the want of domestic accommodation when the mills are closed. I obtained a singular confirmation of this fact from one of the most respectable cotton-spinners in Lancashire ; he kept a list of all the intrigues detected in his very large establishment, and in nine instances out of ten the seducers did not belong to the same mill as the seduced.*

There is in Manchester an asylum for the houseless poor, which received more than 17,000 inmates during the year ending with February, 1839. The Rev. Mr. Parkinson, a clergyman resident in Manchester, a person of much intelligence, and held in great esteem by men of all parties in that town, inquired, at the annual meeting of the subscribers to the night asylum, as to the proportion of the persons relieved who came from the town and neighbourhood, and received for answer that a very small portion indeed came from those districts. Mr. Parkinson then observed, "My reason for putting the questions which have been so satisfactorily answered, with reference to the proportion of applications from residents of this town and those from casual visitants, was, that unless the statement were to go forth with some explanation, a handle would be made of it at a distance, and we should have persons exclaiming—'Look what a miserable population they have

* Notes of a Tour, &c. 256, 257.

in Manchester, not less than 17,000 of its poor inhabitants have been driven to ask for refuge at the Asylum of the Destitute !' It is important, therefore, that the statement should go forth that the institution is open, not merely to the inhabitants of this neighbourhood, but to all who seek for shelter therein ; and that the proportion of strangers has hitherto far exceeded that of the population of our own neighbourhood. I was desirous, moreover, that the proportion should be specifically stated, because I believe that a feeling is become very prevalent elsewhere that there is something in the character of manufactures which is unnatural, and opposed to the will of God. Now I maintain, that the state to which we are tending in manufactures is as much the will of God as agricultural pursuits. I have no national predilections for my present mode of thinking. My birth and early education put me in a very different position from the one in which I now am ; but being now an inhabitant of Manchester—having had ample opportunity of observing and judging—and being in a position where I can have no motive for a partial judgment, I maintain that, if we can strike an average of all classes of our population and the population of other districts, we shall find that the morality of this district will not be below that of the most primitive agricultural population. I have the authority of a high military officer, and also that of other persons for saying that the streets of Manchester, at ten o'clock at night, are as retired as those of the most rural districts. When we look at the extent of this parish, containing at least 300,000 souls—more than the population of the half of our counties—can we be surprised that there is a

great amount of immorality? But a great proportion of that immorality is committed by those who have been already nursed in crime in districts of the country supposed to be more innocent than our own, and are, apparently, added to the number of those who swell our police reports, not so much because we hold out greater facilities in rearing them, as that they are apprehended through the superior vigilance of our police. I think it desirable that I should state this, as being an impartial observer, and one coming from a distant part of the country; and as I see gentlemen of the press here, I hope that my evidence may be recorded." Dr. Taylor reckons the necessitous properly of Manchester, who seek refuge in the Asylum, at not more than one in ten.

It must be borne in mind, that the 300,000 souls in the one parish of Manchester have their home within the space of four or five square miles, instead of being diffused, as they would have been in an agricultural district, over forty or fifty of such miles. What wonder if delinquency should be more a matter of observation, as being thus concentrated, and what wonder if nearness should serve at times to magnify it beyond its just limits?

Concerning the inhumanity and indecency, and the consequent demoralization, attendant on the mode in which women and young girls are employed in coal mines, it is impossible to speak in too strong terms of reprobation; and most happy should we be to see juvenile labour both in mines and factories placed under some more extended restriction. We could sincerely wish that no child below thirteen years of age should be admitted to such employment. But let it never be for-

gotten, that such a reform would be only so much pure mischief if it came alone. Before so large a number of children are thrown thus loose upon society, we must possess some reasonable security that they will be moderately well attended to and instructed by their parents. But the parents of such children frequently want the ability, oftener the opportunity, and sometimes the wish, to provide them with instruction, or to impress on them the importance of habits of cleanliness, sobriety, and industry. Were they turned out of the factories, in the present state of things, few would either go to the country or to school. Four-fifths of them would be found in the streets, acquiring a taste for idleness, and would be only too early initiated in the vicious practices prevalent among the dregs of the populace in Manchester, Glasgow, Leeds, and other great towns. Whatever may be the state of morals in such towns at present, we do not scruple to say, that it would have been manifold worse but for the factories. Beside taking the young out of harm's way, factory employment has done much to imbue them with regular, orderly, and industrious habits. Their earnings are considerable, and are a material assistance to their parents; and what they thus gain disposes them to perform their task with a readiness unknown to ordinary apprentices, who generally serve without pay, merely that they may learn some trade. In addition to which, many factories have both day schools and Sunday schools attached to them, which the children attend.

It must be steadily borne in mind, then, in contemplating any further release of children from such employments, that primary instruction must be provided

for them in such form as to be efficient, to be readily accessible to them, and to be an object of interest to their parents. Nor must it be forgotten, that at least the greater part of these schools, to be adapted to a manufacturing population, must be based on the principle of instruction for all, excluding every infusion of a nature adapted to convert the school-house into a place for making religious proselytes.*

SECTION II.

ON THE MORALITY OF RURAL DISTRICTS.

WHEN the poets of the last century were pleased to describe our village scenes as so many regions of Arcadia, and our village groups as so many models of pastoral

* Since the above, and the preceding observations, on this subject were published, the attention of the country has been called to the question by the educational clauses in Sir James Graham's Factory Bill. In the discussion awakened by that measure I have not seen anything of a nature to induce me to change, or even to modify my expressed opinions. There are modes in which our government might assist the nation in educating itself, and in which, as I conceive, it ought to be so employed; but in England, the business of conducting popular education must rest with the people, and not with state functionaries. With us, no scheme which is not based on a principle of religious equality can be otherwise than mischievous; and any system severed from popular control, and not dependent, at least in the main, on popular support, though it might cover the land more equally, it would not cover it so efficiently as the present system—or rather no-system. The nation which is self-educated is a nation doubly blessed—blessed in the good which is secured, and blessed in the social manhood from which it springs.—*Note to the Second Edition.*

simplicity and innocence, they could not have been insensible that they were giving a false character to the country, that they might minister to the false taste of the town. The natural had no place either in the descriptions which were thus published, or in the society to which they were addressed. It was a kind of poetry in which art and elaboration were in the place of truth and nature. It imputed to rustics the puling sentiments which had become naturalized in St. James'. It consisted, for the most part, of a paltry compliment, offered by the pensioned poet, to the conventional follies of his courtly patrons.

Every humane man would be happy to think, with some modern travellers, that savages are generally very simple-hearted, inoffensive, and kindly-disposed persons; and to think, moreover, with certain of our own by-gone poets, that there is something in the quietude and beauty of the rural landscape which imperceptibly refines the intellect and moral sentiments, so that the people who dwell in such scenes necessarily become assimilated to those ideas of the piping swain and lovely shepherdess which were made to be so familiar to our imagination by book and pencil in our boyhood. But the men who have visited savages, and the men who know what the character of a peasant population really is, need not be reminded of the gross deception which has been practised on the weak and unsuspecting by such descriptions.

There is one virtue, and only one, which is uniformly more regarded among rude nations than among the civilized—the virtue of hospitality. And even that virtue, in the case of every comparatively homeless and

scattered people, while it is in a great degree the offspring of necessity, is not only found compatible with almost every vice, but is much too wild and indiscriminate to be in any intelligent alliance with benevolent feeling. The most ancient, and the most unsuspecting account we possess, concerning the early stages of human society, and the vices or virtues natural to them, is supplied by Moses, and this account is far from being of a kind to sanction the notion that the life of wandering herdsmen, or of any comparatively rude people, is indeed favourable to morals.

The book of Genesis is very instructive on this point. The narrative which speaks of Tamar as taking her place by the wayside, in the manner understood as that of a harlot, is sufficient to shew that vice in that form had become a matter of regular avocation even in those times. Judah, one of the worthiest of the sons of Jacob, fell readily into the snare which was thus laid for him; and when it became known to him that his guilt in that matter was the guilt of incest, the woman being his own daughter-in-law, we see no signs of the remorse and penitence which such a discovery might have been expected to produce. Abraham lived in constant apprehension on account of the beauty of Sarah, fearing lest some man should murder him in order to possess her person, and she was made to pass in consequence as his sister. We have read the story of the wife of Potiphar. We remember the violence suffered by Dinah, the daughter of Jacob, at Sechem, and the treachery and cruelty practised on the people of Sechem, by the brothers of Dinah, to avenge her dishonour, notwithstanding the manifest repentance of the individual who had done the wrong.

And if the conduct of these brothers toward their younger brother Joseph, and toward their father, the aged Jacob, may be taken as indicating the kind of moral feeling natural to a pastoral and partially civilized state of society, there is certainly little in such a retrospect that could prompt any moral man to desire a return to it. Nor is the picture much improved if we look to the history of the relationship previously subsisting between Jacob and Esau, and between Isaac and Ishmael. In that connexion we can see little to admire in the conduct either of Sarah or Rebekah. And who can have read the account of the deceitful and cruel dealing practised by Laban on his kinsman Jacob—practised, too, with so much hardened effrontery—and not feel indignant that this man of the herds should have become so much an adept in the science of a cunning and pitiless selfishness, as to have left little to be acquired in that shape by any in the race of knaves that should come after him? If we meet with facts like these in connexion with the line of families to whom divine revelation was committed, and to whom the divine promises especially pertained, what might we not expect elsewhere?

When Tacitus penned his glowing description of the virtues, which, as he alleges, flourished among the barbarians of Germany, Rome had passed through a state of rude hardihood with high comparative moral feeling, and having been elevated still higher for a season, by a more advanced civilization, she had at length fallen from that elevation, and become a prey to every form of luxury and corruption. We may well excuse an indignant patriotism, if chargeable with something of excess, when endeavouring to shame a degenerate people from the

path of ruin by means of such examples ; and it is possible that to some feeling of this nature we should in part ascribe the praises which we so often hear bestowed on the refinements of peasants and savages.

Some conclusion may be formed in respect to morals in our rural parishes, from the fact that of 1847 pauper children in the workhouses of Norfolk and Suffolk, little more than a twelvemonth since, not less than 543 are classed as illegitimate.* We may also adopt some further conclusion on this subject from the fact, that while among our peasantry generally it is not more than half their number who are able to read, among the pauper peasantry it has not been usual for more than a third to be able to do so. If the statistics of crime are in the great majority of instances the statistics of ignorance, the nature of the inference to be deduced from this want of education must be obvious.

In the First Report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners, there is a section entitled "State of the Rural Districts in respect of Crime committed by Resident Delinquents," and the details there given, leave the country very little ground to boast itself in regard to such matters against the town. From a parish named, in Devonshire, it is reported, "crimes committed by residents are those of petty robberies, as stealing wood : also the nocturnal work of stealing turnips, poultry, and portions of ricks, all of which, it may be said, are overlooked, principally through fear of revenge from the criminal parties." From Northborne, near Deal, it is stated, "the principal felonies are those of sheep-stealing,

* Poor Law Report.

which is very prevalent. Scarcely a week passes but a theft of this kind occurs." In Northborne, it seems, nothing moveable is safe, except "under lock and key." Of the parish of Holbeach it is reported, "There are many felonies and misdemeanors committed. Sheep-stealing and horse-stealing are very prevalent:—twenty sheep and six horses have been stolen out of the parish of Holbeach alone. There have been twelve felonies and misdemeanors in the parish of Sutton, and the same number in the hamlet of Whaplade." From the Sleaford union, in Lincoln, the statement is, that more than a hundred felonies, and numerous misdemeanors, had been committed within the year. From Hinckley, in Bucks, a similar report is made. From a parish in Dorsetshire:—"The number of sheep missed in this parish this year amounts to about forty—the greater number, it is to be feared, were stolen." From the parish of Braughing, in Essex, a guardian of the poor writes, "No cattle have been maimed, but many sheep have been stolen, both in this parish and in the surrounding neighbourhood. It is not an uncommon practice to lay open sheep-folds, and to turn the flocks loose at night; to pull up and destroy young trees; to lift gates off the hinges, carry them away, throw them into ditches, or, what is still more dangerous to the public, to lay them flat upon the roads. During the whole of last winter, scarcely a week passed without sheep, pigs, poultry, corn, straw, being stolen, generally with impunity. Although two men were transported for stealing forty pounds in the house of a publican, two others for sheep-stealing, and one other for breaking into a hen-roost, those punishments caused no interruption of the practice. Scarcely a hen-roost in the parish

escaped robbery; some were broken into very early after dark, and the poultry left killed, if not taken away. Ducks, fowls, and turkeys, were several times stolen or killed in the day-time."*

We have reason to believe that village depredations of this nature by "resident delinquents" are common to much the greater part of the country. The sufferers often make little effort to detect the offenders, because to prosecute would be to expose themselves to revenge, in the firing of their property, the maiming of their cattle, or other mischiefs. Farmers' men often plunder their employers, being encouraged by parties from a distance, whom they meet at the village public-house or beer-shop. Large quantities of farm produce may be subtracted by such men without its being missed, and embarrassment and ruin ensue to the farmer almost without the cause being suspected. Nor is the little property of honest labouring men more safe than that of the farmer. Many such men have been ready to give up their allotment system, from so often finding, that the labour to sow, in their case, was only that the village thief might reap. In such cases the delinquents are generally parties who extend their depredations to a number of parishes round.†

This prevalence of depredation in the rural districts, and in nearly all the forms in which depredation may be practised is, as we must suppose, little suspected by the class of persons who have learnt to regard the great city mainly as conducing to generate vice and crime, and the dwellers in villages as constituting almost neces-

* Report, pp. 70—72.

† Ibid. pp. 73—78.

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sarily an unsophisticated and harmless population. Nor is it only true, that in respect to matters of theft, and other minor offences, the country has little to boast as compared with the town ; but it is well known that the cases of extreme individual depravity in the latter connexion, may generally be paralleled by cases of the same description in the former ; and in the instance of one large class of offenders, found more or less round the whole coast of England and Wales, there is a brutality of habit exhibited in prosecuting the trade of plunder, which can hardly be said to be equalled in the history of crime in the great cities of modern times.

Our reference is to that class of delinquents who practise plunder upon wrecks. From Sunderland, round to Cornwall, and from the Frith of Solway, on the opposite side of the island, round to the same point, you may find people, amounting at certain points to many hundreds, and even to thousands, who live wholly, or for the most part, by such means. These people reside mostly in villages on the coast, some of them at places considerably inland ; and are always found in the greatest number where the coast is the most dangerous, as in parts of Cheshire, Dorset, and Cornwall. Whole families, and frequently clans of families, are known to give themselves systematically to such means of subsistence. In districts where they are few, it commonly happens that there is no constabulary force to keep them in check ; and where they are many, that force is never sufficient to overawe them. It is only by means of the coast guard that any effectual restraint can be laid upon them, and that force is much too limited to be capable of acting otherwise than very partially in this subsidiary

service ; the season in which they are wanting anywhere—the season of the storm—being that in which they are wanting everywhere. Some of these marauders possess boats, and call themselves fishermen ; but multitudes of them have been aptly described by a revenue officer who has seen much of them, as the “ barn-door savages ” of our rural population. It often happens, in such cases, that the local authorities fear to institute prosecution or search, so forward are these banditti to threaten secret revenge should they be made subject to such inconvenience, and so prompt are they in carrying such threats into execution. They calculate, accordingly, on the pusillanimity both of constables and magistrates.

It is not easy to conceive of anything more demoralizing than the habits of these men. They look to the storm as the vulture looks to the battle field. The season of direst misfortune to others is as the time of harvest to them. They know well the state of the elements which promises to bring their spoil within their reach. They can see that a wreck is at hand long before it happens ; they hover from point to point as the catastrophe approaches ; and when the fated vessel has struck, the blow which comes as a death-knell to the unhappy on board, is as hope realized to these expectants on the shore. In that moment of agony, the humanity which should save the perishing, is lost in the rapacity intent upon its gain. The course of the elements, which has thrown the vessel on the shore, now drifts her property and crew in the same direction, and to the plunder of her store is added that of the living and the dead. Frequently more than one wreck holds out its temptations at the same time, and the spoil becomes proportionate.

Every such adventure is followed by a long interval of intoxication, and often by turbulent broils in respect to the division of the produce ; and while the immediate agents are thus demoralized, the country round shares in the infection, the people in general becoming, in a sense, parties to these deeds, by becoming the secret purchasers of the booty so obtained.*

Of course we are not to judge with regard to the morality of our rural population generally, from the character of this or any other class of delinquents. In the country, as in the town, the parties chargeable with vice openly affecting the morals of society, and with crime against the law, constitute the exception, rather than the body of the people. But while the offences chargeable on our manufacturing districts, and on our cities and towns, are scrupulously registered against them, it cannot be consistent with justice, that a veil should be allowed to rest on the same evils as affecting the home of the agriculturist. In the latter connexion, the exhibition of depravity, all things considered, is as great as in the former, while in the former there are, as will presently appear, *redeeming elements which have little or no place in the latter.*

The virtues of our English peasantry are nearly all of the passive kind. The great requirements from them are, obedience to their employers, as regards their secular duties ; and obedience to the instruction of the parish minister, as regards their religious duties. But their moral education results, in only a slight degree, either from their going to school or from their going to

* Report of the Constabulary Force Commissioners. 109—126.

church. It is the result, in a much greater measure, of an indirect influence from the state of society about them, and of the influence naturally exerted over them by the affection and the comparative experience of their parents. The ideas and feelings known as those cherished by their superiors, the value of character, the necessity of industry, and the like, are the lessons natural to the village parent, and imperceptibly mould the habits of the better class of the young to the sort of obedience expected from them. But the season for such instruction is short. The young in the family of the labourer soon become strangers to their home. The peasant boy commonly goes to his work on the farm at as early an age as the artisan boy goes into the factory; and the girl also is fitted for service as speedily as possible: and then the moral oversight of the parent, and all the nurturing of the home affections, give place to less favourable associations. Husbandry, accordingly, in this view of it, is not greatly more favourable to morals than manufactures.

Nor is there the slightest reason to suppose that the farmer is more humane as a master than the mill-owner. Every one knows that of late years there has been a large influx of children from agricultural to manufacturing labour, and it is natural to ask, would it have been so if the change were known to be from a less state of suffering to the greater? What is more, if anything could have disposed these and other emigrants from the agricultural districts to return to their former abodes, would they not have been so disposed by the long pressure of distress in the districts to which they have migrated? What must that recollection of a rural life

be, which causes these sufferers, even in such circumstances, to shrink from the thought of returning to it! Is it in the face of such facts that we must still be hearing of the inhumanity of mill-owners, as compared with land-owners?*

SECTION III.

ON THE CONVICTION OF OFFENDERS, CONSIDERED AS EVIDENCE OF SOCIAL IMMORALITY.

IN judging with regard to the morality of any people, it is important not merely to look to the number of persons who may be brought under the penalties of law, nor simply to the loudness of the complaints which may be raised against the real or supposed vices of society. Both these facts may point to the existence of a certain,

* The following passages, from Defoe's "Plan of the English Commerce," will shew how the impulse to such migrations operated at the beginning of the last century :—

"The reason of the thing answers for itself: a poor labouring man that goes abroad to his day's work, as husbanding, hedging, ditching, threshing, carting, &c., and brings home his week's wages, suppose it eightpence to twelpence a day, or in some countries less, if he has a wife and three or four children to feed, and who get little or nothing for themselves, must fare hard and live poorly; it is easy to suppose it must be so. But if this man's wife and children can at the same time get employment, if at next door, or at the next village there lives a clothier or a bag maker, or a stuff or drugget weaver, the manufacturer sends the poor woman combed wool or carded wool every week to spin, and she gets eightpence or ninepence a day at home; the weaver sends for her two little children, and they work by the loom, winding, filling quills, &c., and the two bigger girls spin at home with their mother, and these earn threepence or fourpence a day each; so that, put it together, the family at home gets as much as the father gets abroad, and generally more. This alters the case extremely, the family feels it,

and, possibly, a large amount of social depravity. But they may not be symptoms of disease in the social system, so much as of its opposite. It is to be expected that where numbers are the greatest, delinquency will be the most frequent. But with the increase of the number disposed to do wrong, there will be an increase of the number intent on detecting and punishing the wrong-doers. With the increase of property comes the increase of law designed to protect property, and an increase of vigilance to prevent or punish offences against property.

Hence the change in this case may be, not that crime has become more prevalent, but that a greater number of actions have been adjudged criminal,—and not so much that more crime is committed, as that less crime escapes detection. We judge of the public feeling in its

they all feed better, are clothed warmer, and do not so easily or so often fall into distress; the father gets them food, and the mother gets them clothes; and as they grow, they do not run away to be footmen and soldiers, thieves and beggars, or sell themselves to the plantations to avoid the gaol and the gallows, but have a trade in their hands, and every one can get their bread.

“I remember, after the late plague in France, and the peace in Spain, the run for goods was so great in England, and the price of everything rose so high, that the poor women in Essex could earn from one shilling to one shilling and sixpence *per diem* by spinning. What was the consequence? ’Twas too plain to be concealed. The poor farmers could get no dairymaids: the wenches told them in so many words they would not go to service for twelvecpence a week when they could get nine shillings a week *at their own hands*, as they called it: so they all run away to Bocking, to Sudbury, to Braintree, and to Colchester, and other manufacturing towns of Essex and Suffolk. The very ploughmen did the same. As soon as the demand slackened from abroad, all these loose people were turned off, the spinners went a begging, the weavers rose in rebellion.”

relation to morality, from the character and administration of law as opposed to the immoral, and from the spontaneous expression of public sentiment on such matters. The apparently small number of offenders in a country, when it may be traced to a want of adequateness in the law to detect offences, becomes so much evidence, not of the existence, but of the want, of strong moral feeling in society generally. In the absence, also, of any loud complaint against vice, we may trace, as elsewhere observed, the absence of any strong feeling on the side of virtue. Laws based upon sound moral principle, indicate the strength of the general moral feeling ; and the steady enforcement of such laws, is a public expression of confidence in that feeling.

We should hardly deem it wise to allege, that the general health has never been in so bad a state as at present, because medical remedies have never been so numerous. In the same manner, the multitude of our laws with a view to the security of property, is not so much evidence of an increased disposition to do unjustly, as of an increased purpose in society to punish all such doing. Law has become more complex and refined, that crime may be more difficult, more hazardous, and, in consequence, less frequent. On this ground the complaints in respect to the vices of society with which we are so familiar, are not so much evidence that society is wholly corrupt, as that there is a strong feeling preserved in it which is ever acting as the antagonist of corruption.

Depraved nations do not account it policy to give a full publicity to offences, and the punishments which they inflict in public are few compared with those in-

flicted in secret. Nor do we hear among them much of the language of regret or complaint in respect to their depravity. It is with them, as with the profligate, who has gone the full round of forbidden indulgence—the reconciliation to vice is complete, and the quiescence which follows is natural.

On this subject it should never be forgotten, that the increase of wealth must always bring with it an increase of population, thus multiplying at once the numbers to be tempted and the means of temptation. The county of Middlesex is ten times more populous now than some generations since; but if we suppose the convicted offenders in Middlesex to be greater than ever, that fact would not be evidence that Middlesex is more immoral than ever. Immorality, as affecting society, is relative, in respect to numbers, law, and a multitude of circumstances beside. One physician may have a thousand patients in his charge, another not more than a hundred, but the fact that the man of the greater practice has more die under his hand than the man of the less, is no evidence that the former is not a much more valuable physician than the latter. If the vice of Middlesex be greater now than three centuries since, it must be remembered that so is its virtue, and that it is from the proportions between this relative increase that our conclusions must be formed in respect to the moral progress of the people of Middlesex during that period.

It is proper, also, to remember, in judging thus concerning the apparent vice of society, that our facilities of communication and publicity—as in the multiplication and improvement of roads, and the increase of newspapers—have tended to make the evils of society known

as they were not known formerly, and as they are not known at present in any other country of Europe. What Britain is, also, in this respect, as compared with the continent, our towns are as compared with our counties.

From all these causes it follows, that the apparent scale of public morality is often a very different thing from the real one. It would often do much toward abating the fears of the moral alarmist, if he could be induced to extend his observation beyond the comparative evils of society to its comparative good.

SECTION IV.

ON THE PRESUMPTION THAT THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN GREAT CITIES MUST BE FAVOURABLE TO MORALITY, FROM ITS RELATION TO INTELLIGENCE.

IF it be true that it is in the tendency of great cities to raise intelligence to its maximum, it would not be to do much honour to morality to allege, that we must expect to see it flourish the least, where intelligence is known to flourish the most. This would not be to say much in favour of the connexion which is thought to subsist between morality and utility, or between the just and the reasonable. Such a doctrine might be natural to the enemies of morality, but is hardly to be expected from its friends. We can readily perceive how it might happen, that the instances should be numerous, in which men seem to become more intelligent, only that they might become more adept in the indulgence of

their vices. But that this abuse of intelligence should be regarded, the subject being looked upon adequately, as more natural and more probable than the use of it, is a form of delusion scarcely possible to any mind accustomed to reflection.

It is ascertained as the effect, even of the most elementary instruction, that in proportion as it reaches the people at large, it diminishes crime, creates a power of self-government, and demonstrates to the great majority brought under its influence, that the rogue's arithmetic is based on false principle, that as such it must always lead to false results, and that the most expedient course of action, even in the case of the selfish, is that, which, by conducing to character, conduces to power. Thus the man who is placed in possession of a new power to do wrong, is placed under the influence of new motives to do right. In the moral world, as in the physical, the true equilibrium of things is realized by the action of opposite forces. The sphere of our responsibility widens with every increase of intelligence, wealth, and association ; but it does not widen as opening new sources of temptation, more than as presenting new considerations on the side of resisting temptation. In this manner, it is provided that the bestowments of heaven should take their own safeguards along with them, at least in such degree as is necessary to the great purposes of moral government. The greater power to do evil, is meant as a greater power to do good ; and every just view of the Infinitely Good would lead us to conclude, that where he has sown the most, so as to render the abounding of good in the greatest degree practicable, there he expects to reap the most in the

form of good. If it be reasonable to suppose that his designs point toward such a result, it is then no less reasonable to conclude, that the web of his moral government has been wrought so as to subserve that end, and that city life, as meant to be that of eminent intelligence, was meant to be that of eminent morality.

SECTION V.

ON THE PRESUMPTION THAT THE MANUFACTURING SYSTEM
MUST BE FAVOURABLE TO MORALS, FROM ITS ACCORD-
ANCE WITH THE LAWS OF PROVIDENCE.

It is not more clearly the design of Providence that men in general should possess their settled dwelling-places, and that they should till the ground, and build cities, than that some countries should be distinguished much more than others as the home of manufactures. As different soils in all parts of the world are adapted to different kinds of natural produce, so different countries are adapted by their location, their climate, their treasures in the shape of raw material, and by their science and civilization generally, to become distinguished in particular branches of artificial production.

Had the position of Britain been in the centre of Europe, in place of being that of an island, separated as it now is from the mainland of the continent, it would not have been possible that our history in relation either to manufactures or commerce should have been at all such as it has been. We could not in that

case have commanded from the distant regions of the earth, the raw material necessary to some important branches of our manufactures; nor could we have disposed of our produce to the people of other nations at all in our present manner. But the hand of Providence, which has surrounded us by the waters of the ocean, has set before us in the open seas the great highway of nations, and has thus facilitated our intercourse for the purposes of traffic with all the shores and dwelling-places of the globe.

Our soil is sufficiently extended and productive to afford supplies for a large home population, and to hold out adequate encouragement to the labour of cultivation. But the land is nowhere such as to yield its supplies without labour, and our climate is favourable to that measure of exertion which is demanded by the nature of the soil. It is a land adapted to an active and energetic, and not to an indolent or luxurious population. Our wants in respect to places of abode, clothing, warmth, and physical comfort generally, are considerable, and all are placed within our reach, but only upon condition of our putting forth that degree of effort to secure them which is found to be most conducive to the progress of society. With us, accordingly, national wealth must be the result of national industry; and thus the means of indulgence which might have proved fatal to social morality, are made to have their place in alliance with the active habits which promise to perpetuate a stronger disposition in its favour.

Nor is this all. Our manufactures in wool, and in the application of the useful metals—as iron, tin, copper, and lead, not to mention other things, are the

natural effect of our being possessed of the raw material in those particulars in so great abundance. When the material of a manufacture is light, and such as may be pressed into a small space, its importation from a distance may be consistent with deriving a profit from the labour bestowed upon it, though even in such a case the advantage is on the side of home production, as securing independence of other nations, whose jealousy should be presumed as certain, and whose occasional hostility should be accounted as probable. But when articles are very heavy and very bulky, their conveyance from a distance is necessarily attended with great expense, and a profitable manufacture of material so obtained is hardly possible. It is in proportion as a nation has such materials at its doors—if we may so speak—that it may be expected to employ its skill upon them so as to compete successfully with its neighbours: and such in a signal degree are the circumstances in which we have been placed by the hand of Providence.

The success of our manufacturing system has been dependent especially on two points—on machinery and fuel. Our machines are constructed mostly of iron, brass, and steel; and had it been necessary to import these metals from a distance, we see not how mechanical power could have been at our command in a degree to have given us any precedence of other nations. But the great impetus to British industry, and to all the consequences attendant upon it, has been our coal mines. This must be manifest on only glancing at a map having the coal fields marked out upon it, and comparing it with the history of our population during the last hundred years. In the southern counties there

is very little coal, and the old towns in that part of the kingdom, such as Canterbury, Taunton, Salisbury, and Exeter, remain nearly stationary, or increase only by very slow degrees; while in the north, towns of comparatively recent origin, such as Birmingham, Manchester, Liverpool, Leeds, Glasgow, and Paisley, have risen to be places of the greatest importance, their population having increased to some four or five times their previous numbers, in little more than half a century. The population of Lancashire is now about eight times as great as at the commencement of the last century. Had we possessed the most abundant supply of the ores of iron and of other useful metals, they would have been of little or no use, but for our almost inexhaustible coal mines. Our country is of too limited extent to produce wood sufficient to smelt and prepare any considerable quantity of iron, or other metal; and though no duty were laid on timber when imported, its cost abroad, and the heavy expense attending the conveyance of so bulky an article, would have been insuperable obstacles to our making any considerable progress in the working of metals, had we been forced to depend on home or foreign timber. An intelligent writer on this subject has accordingly remarked—"We are disposed to regard Lord Dudley's discovery of the mode of smelting and manufacturing iron by means of coal only, without the aid of wood, as one of the most important ever made in the arts. We do not know that it is surpassed even by the steam-engine or the spinning-frame. At all events, we are quite sure that we owe as much to it as to either of these great inventions. But for it, we

should always have been importers of iron; in other words, of the materials of machinery. The elements, if we may so speak, out of which steam-engines and spinning-wheels are made, would have been dearer here than in most other countries. The fair presumption consequently is, that the machines themselves would have been dearer; and such a circumstance would have counteracted, to a certain extent, even if it did not neutralize or overbalance the other circumstance favourable to our ascendancy. But now we have the ores and the means of working them in greater abundance than any other people; so that our superiority in the most important of all departments—that of machine-making—seems to rest on a pretty sure foundation.”* What is thus said concerning the making of machinery, may be said concerning the use of machinery when made. Without those hoarded treasures, those warehoused supplies which are laid up in our coal mines, our steam-engines would be comparatively powerless. By this means we may not only command power almost without limit, but may command it almost anywhere, in place of being dependent, as in the case of water-power, on the neighbourhood of streams and waterfalls. It should be added, that not only is steam-power much more accommodating, in this respect, than water-power, it is much more economical than horse-power would be, even supposing a sufficient quantity of the latter might be obtained.

Now can it be reasonable to be observant of these facts, and of some others of a moral nature hardly less

* Edinburgh Review, vol. lxi., 456.

potent, all concurring as so much distinct and strong encouragement to our national industry, and then to conclude that the path which has been thus smoothed, as it were, by the forethought and facilities of Providence, is one opposed in its own nature to the great purposes of that Providence? Is it not much more reasonable to look on such provisions as shewing it to be the pleasure of the Almighty that society should be employed in making its way from poverty to wealth, and from rudeness to culture; and as shewing that an opulent social state, and the intelligence natural to that state, should be regarded as most conducive to the ends both of religion and morality? In all the causes adverted to, we see the confluence of a power which has given greater breadth and force to the national intelligence, and were we to say that these causes were not designed to produce this intelligence, and that the intelligence itself, even when viewed at large, should not be accounted as friendly to morality or religion, would not that be in effect to say, that the ends of the divine government are not moral ends, and that the notion which teaches that there is a connexion between human duty and human welfare, and a connexion which must be the more plain the more our reason is made to bear upon it, is a notion that should be henceforth regarded as baseless and deceptive? When the Deity stored our land with so many properties and tendencies favourable to mental culture, he must surely have meant that this mental culture should conduce to moral culture.

SECTION VI.

ON THE NOTION THAT THE COMMERCIAL SPIRIT IS
UNFRIENDLY TO PATRIOTISM.

It is sometimes alleged, that the intercourse into which men are brought with other countries by commerce, and the degree in which their interests become mixed up with those of such countries, must necessarily tend to render them less attached to their native land, and less sensitive in matters affecting its prosperity and honour. Opinions of this nature appear to have been widely entertained by the philosophers of antiquity, and they are the opinions of many among ourselves. But it is not more true that such pursuits carry with them a tendency to abate something of the purely instinctive feeling of patriotism, than that they tend to strengthen its principle by associating it with greater wisdom. It is admitted, that there is much in foreign commerce of a nature to diminish that overweening opinion of ourselves, as compared with other nations, which is natural to all secluded communities. But it must be remembered that some abatement of this evidence of comparative barbarism follows no less naturally as the effect of foreign travel, and as the result of acquaintance with the science and literature, and with the mind and character of foreign nations, as derived from conversation and from books. The prejudice which precludes the thought of comparison in such respects, precludes one of the greatest chances of improvement. The love of country is one of our moral instincts implanted by the Divine

hand, but the same may be said of the love of mankind, and commerce carries with it a tendency to bring these passions into harmony with each other, in place of allowing the former to become so excessive as to cause the latter to become extinct. As it is in respect to class and class in the same community, so it is in respect to nation and nation—the ties created by mutual interest, and the sympathy on both sides awakened by intercourse, tend naturally to diminish the distance between them, and to facilitate relations based on truth, justice, and amity. While higher motives fail, the relations of commerce may thus serve to hold many nations in a degree of unity, and in the bonds of peace.

Every man must be aware that there is a patriotism which, strong as may be its occasional feeling, has scarcely more of the reasonable in it than the attachment of the domestic animal to its owner. It is little else than feeling—feeling for which little reason can be given, which is not easily defined, but which is often highly disinterested, and everywhere powerful enough to bind man strongly to his birth-place. His country, in the case of such a man, is as the house in which he was born, and as the place of the family with whom he has been reared. It connects itself involuntarily with his sympathies, but his feelings in relation to it never become a subject of much scrutiny or reflection. He cannot fail of looking to it for some degree of protection, tranquillity, and enjoyment. But he can be proud even of his servitude, if it be the price paid for such advantages. Such men often judge of the honour of their country, from the greatness of their king as compared with other kings, or from the greatness of their nobility

as compared with other nobles, rarely from their own condition, as belonging to the people, compared with the condition of other people. They flatter themselves that the splendour of their nobility is their own splendour, and that the greatness of their king is their own greatness. They can be content, accordingly, as slaves to their own rulers, so they may thereby give them power to display their superiority over other rulers, and to impose the same servitude on other people. Such men are, in relation to their country, what the race of old servants were in the history of our great families. They give signs of attachment, but it is the attachment of menials. They look with some mixture of reverence and affection on the ancient, the ancestral, but it is on those things as belonging to superiors, and not at all as belonging to themselves, except as they have their place among the appendages to that superiority.

We confess at once that this is a patriotism by no means to our taste. It may be capable of fervid effort, and of some generous sacrifice, but it has not been found so enduring as the patriotism which is based upon principle. It is a patriotism which should not be exposed to protracted trial in the time of war ; and which in the time of peace, would allow a nation to decay, and perish utterly, rather than rise up to save it. Its great virtue consists in attachment to hereditary power, and in obedience to that power—and should that power be disposed to go wrong, it will be in vain to look to such men for the counteracting influence that may constrain it to go right. We prefer a patriotism which can be more suspecting, and of greater self-reliance—such as can presume to doubt the infallibility of

the powerful, and such as nothing may divorce from the principle of individual responsibility. We do not value the love of country which has respect to it simply because it is our own, so much as that which has respect to it because it is deserving. Intelligence, freedom, citizenship, property—these are the sources of a patriotism more to be coveted by the wise and humane, than that instinctive passionateness, which is characteristic of the heroic savage more than of the civilized man.

Experience, we think, is everywhere in favour of these views. In all times of trial, the commercial states, both of the ancient and modern world, have shewn themselves capable of brave and patriotic effort, and on a scale which no people have surpassed. It was the glory of Tyre to have presented a stronger resistance than all Southern Asia beside to the power of the Babylonian empire in very ancient times, and to the arms of the Macedonian conqueror in a later age. Carthage proved a stronger barrier to the progress of Roman ambition than half the cities of the civilized world. Athens was commercial, but was it less patriotic than Sparta, which was not so? Where do we find so brilliant a patriotism during the Middle Age, as in the history of the commercial republics of Italy, and in the federations of commercial towns in Germany and Flanders; and where over the wide surface of history do we meet with more generous or noble displays of this feeling than in the United Provinces—a band of small commercial states, which having wrung their own freedom from the grasp of the most potent monarchy in Europe, everywhere crossed the path of the despotic like an impassable rampart, and became, during more than two centuries,

the great defenders of the civil and religious liberties of Protestant Christendom ! Much of the spirit in this respect exhibited formerly in the United Provinces, may still be seen in the states of the American Union ; and it scarcely need be observed, that the power which should make war on the great western republic, upon the assumption that her commercial spirit can have left her little of the spirit of patriotism, would not be long in discovering its mistake.

SECTION VII.

ON THE REAL DANGER TO PATRIOTISM IN THE CONDITION OF MODERN SOCIETY.

STILL we do not mean to affirm, by the observations made in the last section, that there is nothing unfavourable to patriotism in society as now existing. In the charge adverted to as brought against the spirit of commercial pursuits, we may perceive an instance of a very common form of error—that of ascribing a state of things to one cause which is the result of many. Commerce may have strengthened the bonds of patriotism in some connexions, and may have been among the causes which have served to abate its force very considerably in others. It may have been one in a number of influences conducing to a great social transition ; and in the course of this transition, the old may have lost nearly all its power, before the new has come largely into its place. Objects which minister to an instinctive patriotism, may have ceased to produce their wonted effect ; and the new habits of

thought which should minister to a rational patriotism, may have been only imperfectly formed. Men may thus have broken the spell of the conventional and traditional in matters of civil obedience, morals, and religion ; and the void which has followed may not have been filled up by a more adequate knowledge, by a new moral training, and a better apprehension of religious truth. Men may have abandoned the dominion of prejudice, but they may not have submitted to the dominion of reason. They may have become incapable of the passiveness which pertained to the times gone by, and they may be as little equal to a right use of the liberties which will distinguish the times to come. The superstitious in every sense may have passed away, but the enlightened may not have come sufficiently into its room, either in respect to the civil or the religious.

It is natural that men in such a state should be discontented, restless, little influenced by patriotism. The past can never be made to fascinate them again ; nor can they be made to look with interest on the present or the future, except as civic motives to patriotism shall come into the place of the feudal—motives derived from civic intelligence, civic virtue, and civic freedom. Having advanced thus far, they can never be taught to retrace their steps ; and to be content in their new position, it is strictly necessary that they should be brought under the influence of the new inducements to patriotism which are proper to it—inducements derived from reason, interest, and religion, and not from mere prescription or superstition.

But to this course, the anti-commercial spirit is directly opposed, and the strength of that opposition

must determine the force and duration of the conflict between these opposite elements. In no country of Europe is this conflicting state of things so conspicuous as in Great Britain. With affairs in such a posture, every effort should be made in order to prepare the people for the enjoyment of civil rights ; and in respect to the question of immediate concession, it will not be the part of wisdom to resolve upon not granting anything, because the demand made may seem to amount to a claim upon everything. The effect of such a course must be to perpetuate and deepen the feelings opposed to patriotism.

It is not, then, from the new spirit natural to commerce, so much as from the old spirit natural to feudalism, that danger is resulting to modern patriotism. In the failure of the nearer relation which bound the vassal to his chief, men need the wider relation which may bind the citizen to his country. It was a marked change in this respect which took place, when men learnt to speak of themselves as the subjects of their sovereign, more than as the vassals of their lord. It was then manifest that the general was beginning to supersede the local ; that the unity proper to the whole was becoming more conspicuous than the power which had conduced to so much isolation in the parts. But the next step is not made—it is only in progress. Men have been proud of their relationship as vassals to their liege lords ; they have become proud of the change which has taught them to feel more as the subjects of powerful sovereigns, than as the retainers of nobles ; and they are on their way to their next social position, that of contentment as the citizens of free states. As a natural centre of organ-

ization, and as a source of chivalrous attachment, the feudal lord is not, and the potency of sovereignty is not, and nothing now remains to serve as the bond of patriotism except free institutions, allied with the intelligence and virtue necessary to a salutary use of them.

SECTION VIII.

ON THE CONNEXION BETWEEN THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN GREAT CITIES, AND THE MORALITY OF LAW, ORDER, AND LIBERTY.

NOR are we accustomed to look on this course of things with apprehension, considered in its bearing on morals. It may be very true that offences against property are more numerous in manufacturing districts, and in large cities, than in rural parishes. But this is saying no more, than that offences against property are most frequent, where property is most abundant ; and that men become the victims of temptation the most, where there is the greater number to be tempted, and where the temptation itself is the strongest. Side by side, also, with the infirmity which yields to temptation, is the virtue which resists it ; and the stronger the test to which virtue is exposed, the higher must be its quality if it shall come forth unscathed. In all such cases, accordingly, it becomes us not merely to look to the positive amount of convicted delinquency, but to the no less positive, and far greater amount, of fairly accredited principle. It is only as men become themselves civilized, that they are found capable of withstanding the

temptations to wrong doing which are opened and multiplied in the relations of civilized life.

It is obvious, that with the first notion of property must come the notion of a right in it as such, and of usage or law as the means of upholding that right. With the increase of wealth, must come the complex social relations natural to it, and a familiarity of mind with all the complex moral questions which those relations involve. To ascertain the just, with regard to such questions, and to secure its enforcement in the best manner, must then be one of the great objects of human sagacity. As some fixed notion on this subject is necessary to the existence of society in its rudest state, so much elaborate thought in relation to it becomes necessary when society has passed from its state of rudeness to refinement. Protection against wrong, in relation to person and property, is then felt to be the great want; and the power of thought and invention directed toward that object, is in proportion to the promptings of the strong law of necessity with regard to it. Hence as society is nowhere so much dependent on the prevalence of enlightened sentiments in respect to all matters of social justice as in great cities, so the intellect, and the passions, in regard to that subject, are nowhere else so disciplined and powerful.

Commercial credit, from its humblest to its very highest form, is based on moral confidence—confidence, not so much perhaps in what the individual trusted might probably do if left to himself, as in what he will be constrained to do rather than brave the resentment with which the moral feelings of society would be prepared to visit the unjust or dishonourable. If much

should be wanting in the principle of the individual, much will be supplied by the principle of society: and if the man should wholly fail in this respect, the community will not. With every step in social advancement, this system of credit widens, and becomes more intricate, and in the greatness of its compass, and in the delicacy of its details, we perceive that as men become more opulent and civilized, they learn to place increasing confidence in each other, manifestly regarding each other as more trustworthy—more moral. In all these respects, the morality of law is the public morality embodied. We may add, that order, punctuality, promptitude, courage, all are more or less necessary to mercantile success, and all are in the same degree necessary as elements of moral habit. Nor can it be less obvious, that the constant and earnest occupation which so effectually precludes idleness, must do much to preclude vice.

We have seen already, that causes which contribute in this manner to the dominion of ascertained law, contribute necessarily to establish general liberty.* But civil freedom is not more the natural offspring of cities, than the natural parent of morality. It owes its origin, indeed, to moral feeling as much as to intellectual attainment, but it reacts upon both as with usury. It is natural that despotism should generate suspicion, concealment, treachery, falsehood, abjectness. It may carry with it some of the appearances of virtue, but only in such degree as may be necessary to perpetuate its peculiar vices. It may be in some degree benignant, but only

* Chap. IV. Sect. III.

in such measure as may be necessary in order that social existence may be possible. In general, the virtues allied with such governments exist in spite of them, rather than as proceeding from them, or as nourished by them.

It does not, indeed, necessarily follow, that the more a people diverge from the line of despotism, the more virtuous they become. But the probability lies strongly in that direction. If they know how to halt within the limits of freedom, without plunging into anarchy, or substituting the despotism of a popular, in place of the despotism of a monarchical power, we may be assured that high moral intelligence has been in action to produce such effects, and that further moral results will not be wanting. The people who possess a freedom of this nature, give evidence in that fact of being distinguished in no inconsiderable degree by their mental cultivation and social virtue, inasmuch as such freedom cannot be expected to come into existence except in alliance with such qualities, and inasmuch as it cannot be expected to continue except as these qualities shall continue. It vests men with a new power to do wrong, which must always be an element of mischief, except as placed in the hands of a people whose prevailing disposition is to do right.

Every such system must conduce to the cause of virtue, in so far as it provides that no man shall be made to suffer as the penalty of virtue. It tends to the suppression of vice, by depriving it of its most plausible excuses, and by connecting it with its merited disgrace. Fear, concealment, deception—all may be accounted comparatively innocent, in the case of the man who sees

in the power above him a huge machinery of suspicion, fraud, and tyranny, from the pressure of which, should he once be deemed an offender, there can be no way of escape. Widely different are the circumstances of the man who can demand to meet his accusers face to face, who can insist on his right, not only to invoke the protection of law, but to sift evidence to the utmost in his own defence, and who, encircling himself thus with the immunities of the free, can set the passions even of the most powerful at defiance. If such a man shall be found wanting in a regard to truth, justice, or humanity, he is thus wanting without excuse. He cannot plead that these vices are the last refuge left by a bad government to the weak. He must know, that, in his case, they are the needless and the chosen vices of the strong. With the free, the law is generally as a terror to evil-doers, and as a praise to those who do well; but with the victim of despotism it is often the reverse; and thus while in the latter case there must commonly be much temptation on the side of vice, in the former case there is always strong inducement on the side of its opposite.

It may be true that a feeling of self-interest has much to do with putting the dispositions of men upon a track of this nature. Men may discountenance wrong generally, in order to protect their own persons, or their own property, against aggression in that form. Much also of the general industry, which by contributing to increase the wealth and intelligence of society, contributes to its moral improvement, may have been carried on without any reference to such a result, and purely with a view to particular or individual interests. Even the men who labour more directly with a view to social im-

provement, as public men and authors, may have their personal feelings to gratify, and their personal interests to serve by such efforts.

But if the spirit of trade and manufactures is to be accounted as unfavourable to morality, because liable to such mixtures of feeling, then agriculture must be regarded as in the same predicament, inasmuch as it can hardly be pretended that farmers are less liable to the influence of narrow selfish passions than merchants. Such moral infirmities are attendant on the cultivation of the soil, in at least as great a degree as on the processes of manufactures. Nor should it be forgotten, that there is a regard to our personal interest which belongs to the virtuous rather than the immoral. It is easy to give bad names to secondary motives—to see in the love of esteem, nothing beside vanity; and in commercial industry, nothing beside covetousness; but that is not the Christian, nor the philosophical, nor even the honest mode of looking at human nature. Admitting the excess of the selfish in most men, we must bear in mind that those who work consciously with a view to human improvement, and those who work toward that end unconsciously, have their place alike in the system of Divine Providence, and are laid under contribution alike toward the accomplishment of its purposes; and that it behoves us to look to the good which is attendant on improved social relations, and always to place it over against the particular forms of evil which may be found to be also attendant upon them.

SECTION IX.

ON THE FREEDOM OF THE PRESS, IN ITS RELATION TO
GREAT CITIES, AND TO MORALITY.

CIVIL freedom, then, is the result mainly of civic association, and it is in the nature of such freedom to contribute, in the manner explained, both to intelligence and virtue. In no connexion is the nature of this freedom so conspicuously exhibited as in the liberty of the press. In no other connexion do we perceive so immediately and fully both the uses and abuses of a state of liberty. By men who look mostly to the bad uses which are made of the liberty of unlicensed printing, it is natural that it should be regarded with suspicion. But men who look upon the effects of a free press largely and considerately, cannot fail to regard that freedom as the most certain indication of popular intelligence and virtue.

If, deeply scandalized by the base excesses inseparable from this liberty, we feel disposed to lay some effectual restraint upon it—the question naturally arises, where shall we begin? Prosecution before a jury or a magistrate, if allowed to bring with it the form and licence of a public trial, must only tend to give large exposition, and much wider proclamation, to matters which the prosecutor is concerned to see suppressed and forgotten. This augmentation of mischief must follow, supposing the accused to be condemned:—but if we suppose the accused to be acquitted, then the obnoxious utterances of one mind, become, in a sense, the approved of other

minds, of minds in authority, of minds understood as representing the mind of the country at large.

Nor is it easy to conceive of any objection that can be urged against unlicensed printing, which will not apply equally to unlicensed speaking. The objection taken in this case, is to certain utterances which have been made public, and whether made to the eye from the press, or to the ear in a public meeting, cannot be a difference of any moment. On the same principle, accordingly, that the writer should be required to submit his manuscript to the approval of a public censor before printing it, the popular orator should be required to submit his written speech to the same ordeal before delivering it—in other words, the plea which would go to put an end to the liberty of the press, would go to put an end to the liberty of all public utterance and association, and must, in consequence, be fatal to public liberty in every form.

The good in this respect, as in respect to all liberty, is not to be obtained without the evil. Men who cannot bear the one, must be content to forego the advantage of the other. The condition of the free will never be one of silence and repose. The press may sometimes bear with a degree of hardship and injustice upon good men, but its natural tendency is to fix merited exposure upon bad men. It may seem to give a diffusion to error which it could not otherwise obtain. But it does the same office in a much greater degree with regard to truth. Truth has so fixed a relation to the reasonable, and error has so fixed a relation to the unreasonable, that discussion, which, as it becomes deeper and stronger, only resembles the light waxing brighter and brighter,

cannot possibly fail to carry with it a powerful aptitude to vindicate the true and to repudiate the false. It is no less natural to error that it should lose by discussion, and to truth that it should gain by it, than it is to the deformed in nature that its disproportions should be revealed by the coming of the daylight, and to the beautiful in nature that its proportions and colouring should become manifest by the same means. Hence, wherever there is unfettered and free debate, we may see that high mental process going on, by which men are always bringing to the test, through the medium of a free press, the distinction between the precious and the vile, between the wise and the unwise. Even the temporary ascendencies of error, resulting from its alliance with infirmities in human nature possessing too strong an affinity with it, only serve to develop its nature more fully, and to prepare the way toward its more signal discomfiture in due time. The lesser points of truth, indeed, may not always commend themselves so immediately to our enlightened apprehension; and artificial causes may contribute to leave men in great difference of judgment concerning them—but the advantages attaching to a state of free thought and utterance, so far as regards the great landmarks of truth and duty, have been so manifest, that no people who have once realized them have ever been known willingly to retrace their steps toward the arbitrary in that respect. That men should choose to fall back from the civilized to the barbarous would be fully as natural.

But let our great cities disappear, and the freedom of the press, and nearly the whole system of liberty of which that freedom is a part, must also disappear. This

system has approached toward maturity only as the old relation between the vassal and his lord, and the subsequent relation between the subject and his sovereign, have given place to the more instructed relationship between the citizen and the community. It is to man as a citizen, that we owe this liberty of utterance; and it is from him that the men who do not dwell in cities have learnt to avail themselves of a freedom which it would not have been in the nature of their habits, and still less within the power of their circumstances, to have originated.

We may see much to confirm this representation, in the aspect of the public press among ourselves at this moment, as compared with that of society. In every newspaper, and in every publication bearing upon disputed questions, the intelligent mind does not see the production of the individual sending it forth, so much as that of the class or party to which he may belong, and which he may be considered as in some measure representing. In the forms of the public press, we see the forms of all the greater and lesser associations into which society at large has wrought itself. It is the grand instrument by which party carries on its conflict with party; and by which the members of each party, though widely scattered, and wholly unknown to each other, contrive to hold communion among themselves. It can cause one man to speak as in behalf of millions, and it can give a marvellous unity to bodies of men, without the common dependence on time and place. It carries with it a power of representation which enables multitudes to speak, as they could not otherwise do without congregating, and to speak better than they would

do if they did congregate. Thus the press is not merely the great instrument of society, but its exact reflexion. It is multifarious, as our habits of preference, pursuit, and association, are multifarious. Its framework, so to speak, is the result, and the strict counterpart, of the framework of our social state.

Men, accordingly, who would effectually supersede the liberty of the press, must begin their labour at a much lower point than that occupied by the press itself—inasmuch as the object of their displeasure has grown up with the liberty of the subject, and with the whole texture of society, and can be superseded only as these shall be superseded. Deny the people this tribunal of the press, as the power before which the delinquent of every grade may be freely arraigned, and they will naturally demand that some other tribunal, no less accessible to them, and no less adapted to its object, may be set up in the room of that which is taken away. The remedy, in this case, would soon manifest itself as a greater evil than the disease; and at the same time, let the press be bound, and let this remedy be denied, and the responsibilities of the governing come so completely to an end, that nothing remains save anarchy or despotism, and the reign of such vices as are inseparable from the former or the latter.

One effect of this marvellous power should not be overlooked. It has been the work of a free press to go far toward substituting the war of the pen in place of the war of the sword; and toward moulding the thoughts of millions of intelligent and high spirited men, so as to cause them to look with as much contempt on the mere profession of arms, as the old military aristocracy were

wont to look on the avocations of the merchant and the trader. Its influence, in this respect, has been progressive through the past, and promises to be so in a more marked degree in the time to come.

We may observe, also, that opinions which men adopt from their own free choice, and not from dictation, are regarded as in a peculiar sense their own, and are retained with a peculiar fondness and tenacity. This is eminently the case with opinions taken up under the influence of a free press.

SECTION X.

ON THE LESS PERMANENT NATURE OF THE SOCIAL RELATION IN MODERN SOCIETY, AND ON ITS MORAL INFLUENCE.

THE tendency of the great facts which characterize modern civilization in regard to the social relations, is an extended subject. In some views, the moral results proceeding from this cause may not be pleasing. But we must look to the feeling which this change has served to generate, as well as to that which it has tended to efface or impair. The relation subsisting between master and servant, landlord and tenant, employer and employed, are no longer the same, either in fact or feeling. The permanence attaching to these relations in more feudal times is hardly discoverable in these later days. Every such connexion seems to partake of the uncertain and the transient, and is wanting accordingly

in the feeling which could not fail to result from old recollections, and from a stronger sense of mutual service, interest, and expectation.

But this change is the natural effect of that greater degree of social independence, and of that nearer approach toward equality, which characterizes modern society, and which brings its good along with its evil. In proportion as society is graduated into classes, men think more about their class than about the community. Protection, and favour, and even sympathy, may descend from those who are above to those who are beneath, but it is still as from the high to the low. It is not the more full, manly, and moral sentiment which has place between equals. No man can have been an observant reader of history, without perceiving that the majority of historians have been men of this defective sympathy; and that in general they have commended themselves to persons of the same temperament. Plebeian wrong and suffering have met with sorry treatment at their hand, plainly because they knew that such things had never met with much consideration from the hands of the classes above plebeians, and because, in the greatness of their wisdom, they had learnt to conclude, that as it has been in this respect, so it must continue to be.

Nor must we regard the immoral tendency of these feudalized relations of society as affecting the strong only. The more nations are unlike each other, the less will they be disposed to amity, and the more at variance with humanity will be the practices of war between them. Hence the cruelties in ancient warfare—especially in the treatment of captives. Similar are the mischiefs resulting from the same cause in a particular

community, when a wide distance separates between some portions of it and others. Each of these social sections may be said to constitute a world of its own, and so little of a fellow feeling is there between them, that the one has no adequate idea of the nature of suffering as endured by the other. Inequality, in this case, has a natural connexion with ignorance, and this ignorance, in the case of the taught and the untaught, has been not a little costly to humanity.

We account it one of the most benignant aspects of modern society, that it tends strongly to diminish the immoral in this form, by abating the power of the causes from which it has proceeded. If the chivalrous devotion induced by the conventionalism of feudal times is gone, something of the sense of moral obligation proper to much wiser times has come. If we are bound less strongly to the men immediately about us, we are bound more strongly to man as everywhere. If we make little pretension to occasional acts of heroic generosity, we know how to value the moral habit which causes a man to abstain from doing wrong, to uphold the right, and to compassionate the suffering. If the humanity of chivalry was an advance on the preceding barbarism, the humanity of modern civilization is a further advance in the same direction. If the rudiments of the moral sentiments in feudalism were sufficient to render it an institute of great social value in its time, it is just the wider expansion, and the more varied application of these rudiments, which has given to the institutes of modern society their distinctive character. Under this new influence, men will be less governed by passion, but they will be more obedient to principle. They may not be

devoid of coarseness, but neither will they be devoid of humanity. They may not be forward to do great things in behalf of each other, but it will be their habit to do a multitude of little things, which, taken together, will prove to be of much greater worth. Nothing daring or brilliant may be contemplated by them, but the place of such things may be well supplied by the honest, the orderly, the laborious, the useful.

In all these respects, our social state is one of great admixture. The new has come into the place of the old, but only in such measure as to bring the opposite elements into almost ceaseless conflict. In no connexion do we feel this change more immediately or strongly than in the relations between master and servant. This has come to be a relationship in which the slightest tokens of sympathy are too often wanting on both sides. On the one side there is little power to command, on the other a restless disinclination to obey. It is plain from this fact, that the very frame-work of society is changing, and that the lower portions of it are approaching more nearly toward the level of the higher.

Still, we are not certain that the moralist should see much to deplore in a fact of this nature. It clearly shows that a new sense of right has taken possession of the class required to serve. But a better sense of right in regard to what is due to themselves, will hardly be separable from a better sense of what is due to others. The present tendencies of society are not toward putting an end to the distinction between the serving and the served—a point which no stage of democracy can reach—but to require that the relation between these parties

should be on another footing than formerly, on a footing involving much more considerateness and humanity toward the dependent and the necessitous. We must confess, that we see little to regret in the circumstances which promise to constrain even the most reluctant to cultivate the bearing, if not the spirit, of humanity. Our conviction is, that little more is needed, than that the wealthy and higher classes should demean themselves toward their inferiors in the manner most consistent with humanity, and with what is due to themselves, in order to their discovering the best remedy against the evil of which they so often complain. It is not the Anglo-American only, but natives of the most aristocratic states on the continent of Europe, who frequently express their surprise on witnessing the contemptuous manners of the English toward their servants. Nor is this conduct anywhere more observable than among the class who are themselves only a little above the dependents so treated.

The causes which have served to diminish the power of the master, have served to diminish that of the parent. In all countries where the government is despotic or aristocratic, the fathers of families are vested with somewhat of a patriarchal authority. In such countries it is not usual to move in anything by the process of many wills, and the same obtains in the family. The father, accordingly, is a kind of sovereign in his household, somewhat after the model of the sovereignty in the state. His dignity, moreover, is hereditary, and those ancestral recollections, to which an aristocratic imagination clings with so much fondness, have in him their centre and chronicler. But where manufactures and commerce make their appearance, augmenting population, and diffusing

equality, the scene becomes greatly altered in these respects. Parental authority then ceases at an early period. The young assume independence at an early age. But this takes place in conformity with general usage, and without any misgiving in regard to its being otherwise than consistent with reason—with a proper filial obedience. The old submit to it as the unavoidable issue of circumstances, and rarely indulge in any of the expressions that would be natural to persons who feel a want of the affection or reverence due to them.

It generally happens that the character of the government among such a people facilitates this kind of change. If based on popular institutions, it looks to men, less as members of families, than as subjects of the state. It distinguishes between the father and the son, but as the former may be the man of most years and of the largest possessions. It looks on men, not as to be idlers at home, but as to be abroad and active wherever occasion may require. It loosens the ties which bind men artificially to their family, but it strengthens all that is natural in the domestic relations, while binding them by new obligations to society at large. Such is the social bearing of a popular form of government, as distinguished from the aristocratic and the arbitrary. It connects a sense of honour with the feeling of individual responsibility, more than with those passions which take the form of the passive.

In some respects the moral influence of these circumstances cannot be regarded as favourable. It cannot be good that the young should often be exposed to the full force of temptation at a season when least capable of meeting it. But it should be remembered, that though

parental authority may cease with childhood, parental influence does not ; and that there is good reason to believe, that what is taken away from the arbitrary or capricious in the parental relation by this means, is more than made up by the connexion into which it is brought with the affectionate and confiding. Among a people whose ideas and impressions are derived from popular institutions, filial affection, if evinced with less of stately observance, may be more genuine, as the effect of having respect to a relationship which has become more free, familiar, and inviting. Parents are not likely to be less considerate or kind toward their children, from knowing that considerateness and kindness are their only means of influence. It is found, also, to a large extent, that a dependent youth is often wasted in habits of open or secret profligacy, while an independent youth leads as often to an early formation of the sober habits of manhood. Nor should we omit to mention, that the change which tends in this manner to bring so much more of equality into the relation between parent and child, tends, on the same ground, to exclude the occasions of jealousy between brother and brother. The law of primogeniture is foreign to this order of things, and the brotherhood which enters upon the path of life on the same terms, should be prepared to act as the pledged helpers of each other.

We may further remark, that in the relationship arising from commerce and manufactures between employers and employed, there is a peculiarity which brings its own mixture of good and evil along with it, and which is deserving of close observation. We have seen that the tendencies of manufactures, and of commercial pursuits,

are favourable to a comparative equality in circumstances, and to the feeling of independence, the self-reliance, the energy, and the ceaseless movement, natural to such a state of society. But it is not more true that commerce is favourable to the democratic form of society, than that society in that form must always be favourable to commerce. The processes of agriculture are slow and regular, and the largest promise of gain from that quarter must be comparatively limited. In manufactures and commerce the stake is much deeper, but success, if realized at all, is commonly more immediate and more brilliant. Failure is more frequent in the latter case, but the prizes seem to be nearer at hand, and are generally of higher value. In this manner commerce creates a skill and enterprise peculiar to itself, and seldom fails of retaining the skilful and the enterprising in their preference of such pursuits. So natural is this course of things, that among such a people, even agriculture ceases to be prosecuted in that spirit of mere routine, or with that strong attachment to a particular soil, which seems natural to it. Men are seen clearing the wilderness, or enclosing the waste, not in the expectation of bequeathing it in its improved state to their children, so much as with the intention of selling it to the highest bidder.

All this arises, obviously enough, from that haste to be rich, which is characteristic of a trading people. Places become valuable and interesting mainly from their relation to that object, and the relation between employer and employed rests too much upon the same ground. Local ties, and social ties, becoming in this manner uncertain, they cease, as a matter of course, to be allied with the strength of feeling almost inseparable from

them when resting on more permanent foundations, and when regarded as including more of mutual interest.

Still, there is more in this case than would seem to be generally perceived. Where peasants are not serfs, much of the uncertainty adverted to will be sure to subsist, even among the cultivators of the soil : and the question concerning permanence of relation between the superior and the inferior will be always one of comparison only, though the scale in this respect will probably turn, in the general, in favour of a peasant, rather than of an artisan population. But the great farmer and the great manufacturer owe their origin to the same cause—the command of capital ; and the cause which separates so greatly between the condition of the employer and employed in both these instances, contributes to render the connexion between them uncertain, and their relationship a matter of mere interest, more than of virtuous feeling. It is admitted that the members of a territorial aristocracy generally live and die on their domains, while the members of the aristocracy created by commerce generally desert the scenes of their labour when looking toward their season of repose. But the race of manufacturers is seen to continue, much as the race of agriculturists continues, notwithstanding the capital embarked in commercial undertakings may be more fluctuating than that employed in agriculture, and may be found to change hands more frequently.

On the whole, therefore, it does not necessarily follow, from the facts now mentioned, that the relation between the manufacturer and the artisan will be less humane than the relation between the great landlord and the peasant. The history of trade-unions, of strikes, and of

machine-breaking, shews plainly that the relation between master and man in the system of manufactures, may become characterized by a lamentable degree of selfishness and malignity. But, on the other hand, a similar inference is suggested concerning the relation between the farmer and the labourer by the history of rick-burning, and by the frequent migrating of our rural population into the manufacturing districts. Nor will it be doubted, by any person competent to judge on such a matter, that the cases are very common in which fully as much of mutual good feeling subsists between the mill-owner and his workman, as between the superior and inferior in any other connexion. The reason is plain; capitalists, whether their property be embarked in a farm or in a mill, subject themselves by such speculations to about the same measure of dependence on the skill and labour of other men, and on that law of Providence which secures a considerable identity of interest between the men who supply skill and labour, and the men who pay for such supplies.

The relations, then, of lord and vassal, of proprietor and serf, have no place in modern society. Hence, uncertainty, with regard to social relationship, is more or less everywhere. But the evil resulting from this change is in great part counteracted by the good which it brings along with it. Men change masters more frequently than in feudal times, but the moral feeling which bound them to one man, or to one household, now binds them to their class or to society. The change is not so much that the heart has lost its moral affection, as that the object of that affection is no longer strictly the same.

It has been alleged by a distinguished writer on sub-

jects of this nature, that the tendency of our manufacturing system, as now carried on increasingly by means of machinery, by division of labour, and by large capital, must be, not only to create a new species of aristocracy in the persons of our large manufacturers, but to lower the operative, both in intelligence and station, in precisely the same ratio,—the man becoming nothing, in proportion as the machine, and the money power commanding it, become everything. But this is one of the many points on which experience is against speculation.*

Machinery has been improved and extended beyond all precedent during the last forty years ; but the British artisan, in place of becoming—as this theory would lead us to expect—a mere automaton, has increased in general intelligence, and in the feeling of independence, in a manner no less unprecedented. It is in the natural course of things that the ingenuity which gives a man a better machine to work with, should give him a more intelligent and a better moral atmosphere to dwell in. Invention makes a less demand upon his skill in some forms, but it renders him more familiar with the exhibitions of skill in other forms, and thus supplies with one hand more than it subtracts with the other. Education comes not from the structure of a loom, but from the texture of society. Hence the sort of skill which is lost to man as an artisan in such case, is more than repaid by the relation into which he is brought with an improved state of society. The lesser order of ingenuity has thus given place to the greater, that in its train might come a greater wealth, and with greater wealth a

* De Tocqueville, iii. 237.

larger measure of general improvement. Thus, while the machine abridges instruction in the factory, it augments the sources of instruction everywhere else. In this manner does Providence often counterbalance the elements of social progress, placing new tendencies toward good, side by side with new tendencies toward evil, and shewing the folly of such predictions concerning the future as are founded on a partial attention to the present.

The danger to the operative classes in our own country, is not from their weakness as compared with their employers, so much as from the disposition which prompts them to make an unwise use of their strength. They know nothing of oppression from the hand of their masters, compared with what they submit to from each other. Perhaps the most tyrannical, and, as the natural consequence, the most demoralizing of all the associations among working men in Great Britain, will be found in the "Grinders' Union" of Sheffield. The ten thousand men included in that union, give power enough to their leaders, to constitute them, in a large sense, the masters even of the masters themselves. But in the secret tribunal which they have rendered thus potent, they find an ascendancy more oppressive, and more opposed to their moral and general welfare, than any possible combination among the masters could have proved. Incendiarism, spoliation, and even murder, are among the expedients with which some of these men seek to perpetuate subjection, both among masters and men, to this new power. Within a month from the day on which I am committing these observations to writing, the premises of a Sheffield manufacturer, and the tools of the

men in his employ, were all given to the flames, each man's tools being worth to him about forty pounds. The perpetrators of this deed—meant as a fitting penalty for violating the laws of the union—were seen on the spot, and might have been convicted, but those who could have given sufficient evidence against them, were, as usual, intimidated from doing so, and the delinquents accordingly escaped !

The murders which these men sometimes commit are perpetrated by a process known under the name of *rattaning*. The grinder in Sheffield performs his daily labour seated across a sort of wooden bench, known by the name of the Horse, the place which would be that of the lowest part of the horse's neck being the position of the grinding stone, which is sent round with the greatest velocity by a mill. The stone is made steady upon its iron spindle by means of wedges, and *rattaning* consists in driving in one of these wedges so far as slightly to crack the stone. The effect is, that soon after the stone is put into its full motion, it separates, the pieces flying off as though sent from the mouth of a cannon, and the unhappy workman, bending in unconsciousness over the instrument of his destruction, experiences a most horrible death !

We say not that the inquisitors of the grinders' union directly commission men to do such deeds. It is sufficient to know that such deeds are done—done in support of their ascendancy, and that there have been occasions on which they have shewn that they knew how to detect delinquent members when disposed to employ their authority for that purpose.

It is true, that, by this means, the Sheffield grinders

command for themselves high wages. But in so doing, they expose their employers to injurious competition in foreign markets; and by earning in the time of prosperity as much in three days as will serve them for seven, they too frequently become as depraved as a very bad use of the larger portion of their time can make them. The great evil in the social and moral condition of these men is, that they are not sufficiently in subjection to their masters, to be delivered, by that means, from this system of tyranny created by themselves.

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SECTION XI.

ON THE ESTIMATE OF WEALTH IN COMMERCIAL STATES.

FEW objections are more frequently made to the spirit attendant on the pursuits of a commercial people than that which imputes to it a sordid idolatry of mere wealth. In the state of society in England especially, it is often alleged by foreigners, that we pay the same, or even greater respect and deference to wealth, than they pay to the external honours conferred on merit by the sovereign; and "that wealth with us, as a social distinction, takes the place even of moral merits; and 'what is a man worth,' means how many pounds sterling he has, without any reference to his merits, real or conventional, to his birth, education, morals, manners, or other distinctions; that if he is poor, he is nothing in society; if rich, he is everything. But this is a mistake, a wrong conclusion from right premises.

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“ Wealth has all that pre-eminence in social distinction with us, which the foreign traveller observes, censures, and is witty over. But what is wealth?—It is a proof, a token undeniable, of great industry, great energy, great talent in his sphere, great social activity and utility in the possessor, or in his predecessor, who acquired it. It is the indubitable proof, generally speaking, of a great and successful exertion of prudence, skill, mental power applied to material interests, and of extensive social action; and what ought to be honoured and esteemed, and held in the highest estimation in an enlightened society, if not the visible proof of these social virtues in the owner or his predecessors?

“ The deference paid to mere wealth honestly acquired, its pre-eminence as a social distinction, stands upon far more philosophical grounds than the social distinction of mere ancestry, or of mere function, or of mere title, or of the empty honours conferred by a sovereign. Wealth is an independent social power, and is the equivalent in the material world to genius and talent in the intellectual—the Rothschilds, the Barings, and these great millionaires are in the world of pounds, shillings, and pence, what the Shakespeares, Goethes, and Schillers are in the world of ideas; and their social action and influence, their wielding of a vast social power, in the working of which the fortunes, the comfort, the bread of millions, are involved, require a grasp of mind, and are entitled to a social distinction, beyond the comprehension of the moustachioed German baron, who, issuing from some petty metropolis, finds, to his utter astonishment, that mere wealth commands greater respect in this working world of realities, than

his sixteen ancestors, his lieutenant's commission, his chamberlain's key embroidered on his coat flap, and his half a dozen orders at his button-holes. The common sense of all countries gives this social distinction to wealth, above any other distinction that is not purely moral or intellectual. The principle is as clearly felt in Russia as in America ; and where public opinion is in free action, as in England, it supersedes the principle of mere conventional distinctions so far, that the latter without the former—nobility, titles, functions, orders, without wealth—are of no social weight. This common, almost instinctive judgment of all men, under all varieties of government, according this pre-eminence of social distinction to mere wealth, proves that this judgment is right, that it is founded on some natural, just, and useful social principle, that cannot be philosophized away ; that wealth, mere wealth, is a more natural and just ground of social distinction, than any conventional ground from mere birth, mere court favour, mere title, or mere rank. It arises from the people, and is conferred by the people ; and all other distinctions arise from, and are conferred by, the will of the court or sovereign. The encroachment of the former on the latter is a barometer shewing the real progress of a community towards a just estimation of social worth and action, and towards a higher moral condition. Where every third man is lounging about, as in Prussia, and generally on the continent, with his orders of merit of some kind or other—and many whose general merits apparently would be nothing the worse of the addition of a little industry to earn a new coat to stick their honours upon—the people, be their forms of government what they may, are but in

a low social and industrial condition—are ages behind us in their social economy, and in their true social education as free agents and members of the community.”* In 1834, the members of all the British orders were below one thousand, while the French *légion of honour* was worn by nearly fifty thousand persons !

SECTION XII.

ON THE MORAL INFLUENCE PECULIAR TO GREAT CITIES AS
OPPOSED TO THE VICES PECULIAR TO THEM.

MUCH has been said in the preceding sections of this chapter with regard to the immorality abounding in large towns, and with regard to the sources of that immorality. It has appeared also, that in the progress of civilization, with every new form of evil, there comes, as by a law of Providence, some new form of good to counteract it, and that the struggle between these opposite elements in the social world is constantly going on, and as constantly subject to change. It never sleeps, and it is never in one stay.

Our wish and aim in relation to this conflict must be that the good may triumph, and that the evil may be abated and removed. But we do not make our way toward that object, either by underrating the good agency which is in operation, or by overrating the evils which seem to bid defiance to that agency. If large towns may be regarded as giving shelter and maturity

* Laing's *Notes of a Traveller*, pp. 173—175.

to some of the worst forms of depravity, it must not be forgotten that to such towns, almost entirely, society is indebted for that higher tone of moral feeling by which vice is in so great a measure discountenanced, and for those voluntary combinations of the virtuous in the cause of purity, humanity, and general improvement, which hold so conspicuous a place in our social history. It is not only true that from cities, good laws, liberal arts, and letters, have, in the main, their origin, but no less true that spontaneous efforts in the cause of public morals, and in aid of the necessitous, made in such a manner as to embrace voluntary association, and a large sacrifice of time, thought, and property, are found almost exclusively among citizens.

The feudal noble, the village esquire, and the rural incumbent, may be moral and humane persons, and their influence may be highly favourable to the morality and comfort of the circle about them. But the permanent and costly institutions designed to act as a means of abating the physical and moral evils of great cities, owe their origin, and nearly the whole of their support, to the people of the cities in which they make their appearance.

Our conclusions on this subject, therefore, will not be just, except as we place in one view with the evils which are generated by the state of society in large towns, the good also which only that condition of society is found competent to call into existence. The immorality of large towns, even when thus viewed, may be very lamentable, but the influence opposed to it will be seen to be of vast amount. The provisions which are thus made against the ignorance, the vice, and the miseries of

society, are so manifold, that it would require large space to explain their nature, and be tedious even to enumerate them. The oversight of this spontaneous benevolence extends to the suppression or discountenance of vice in almost every form, to the restoration of multitudes who have become its victims, to the need of the sick, the sorrows of the bereft, the condition of the homeless and the perishing, and even to the protection of the animal creation against the cruelties often inflicted upon them by the hand of man. These are among the good fruits of great cities, and they are fruits found nowhere else in such abundance, or in such maturity.

* * On one marked feature in the depravity affecting our large towns, and on the remedial measures adopted in relation to it, I beg earnestly to recommend a judicious volume recently published by my esteemed friend, Dr. Wardlaw, under the following title :—"Lectures on Female Prostitution ; its Nature, Extent, Effects, Guilt, Causes, and Remedy." 8vo, pp. 163.

CHAPTER VII.

ON GREAT CITIES IN THEIR RELATION TO RELIGION.

SECTION I.

ON THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN GREAT CITIES AS INCLUDING TENDENCIES UNFAVOURABLE TO RELIGION.

IN states where there is a great distinction of ranks, and especially where that distinction has subsisted very long, it has been the general course of things that religion should be established by law, and that it should be made to acquire visibility in the form of fixed public institutions. It follows, also, from this fact, that obedience to religion, as thus embodied, will be regarded in such states, as a matter no less proper than obedience to so much civil enactment. The upper classes learn to look upon the state religion in this light, and the humbler classes are constrained to follow the example of their superiors. In some cases, this conformity is made sure by law; in others, it is realized in a large measure purely by the force of influence and custom. In the age of Elizabeth, the population of our country parishes were thus constrained by civil penalties; in our own age, the same result follows, in nearly an equal degree, through our agricultural districts, from an influence put forth by the wealth and station which are there more

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or less diffused. The farmer and the village trader are not exempt from such influence on the part of the landholder and the clergyman ; and the labourer is not exempt from such influence on the part of the farmer. Thus the obligation to be present at the public exercises of religion, is handed down from one point to another in the social scale, until it reaches the lowest.

It must not be supposed, however, that this happens because the upper classes, or the classes immediately below them, are, in fact, more religiously disposed than the people at large. Men possess an interest in public order and tranquillity in proportion as they are men of property ; and as the sanctions of law never become so powerful as when allied with religion, men of wealth must in general be sagacious enough to perceive, that to uphold religion is to do much toward upholding all the forms of social security.

But in large towns, and in manufacturing districts, direct influence of this nature is almost unknown. In such localities the poor are little dependent on the rich, the employed are little dependent on their employers. Such of the industrious classes as are prompted by considerations independent of social connexion, to become Christian worshippers, possess full liberty to do so. But such as may, unhappily, be indisposed to engage in such exercises, possess equal liberty to absent themselves from them. It may seem reasonable to suppose that where constraint in this respect is the least, conformity will be the least ; and though there are causes which operate in favour of attention to public worship in large towns as they do not operate elsewhere, still the difference adverted to, so far as it exists, is a difference in favour

of attention to the forms of religion among the scattered population of country districts, as compared with the crowded population of great cities.

In large towns, also, along with this greater degree of social liberty, there is a greater degree of mental liberty, and men frequently avail themselves of the latter to their injury, no less than of the former. It must be a most depraved religious system which does not carry along with it some tendency favourable to religion. But men who do not worship, cease of course to participate in the benefit of such tendency. It is natural, also, that the habit of mind which causes men to abstain from religious observances, should dispose them to indulge in questionings, beyond the limits of the reasonable, in regard to the claims of religious truth. The men who do not render homage to religious truth formally, may be accounted, in the general, as men who do not so regard it mentally. The absence of control in their case is something different from a proper liberty—it often becomes liberty abused, the neglect of the formal being the easy and natural preliminary to a neglect of the truly devout, and even of the moral.

It is the injunction of an inspired instructor—"Prove all things, and hold fast that which is good." But men may lay claim to this freedom, without possessing the natural ability, or the moral temperament, necessary to a wise use of it, and may afford, in consequence, lamentable proof of not knowing where to doubt or where to believe. Where there is great social independence, there should be great mental capability and mental honesty. But in great cities, where men commonly find the liberty to do well, they do not always shew themselves pos-

sessed of those higher qualifications which are necessary to constitute that liberty a real benefit.

There are regions of the earth in which the wants of men are few, and where the multitude seem readily content with the meanest supply of those wants. Such has always been the condition of the greater portion of mankind through the eastern world. The poor despair of ever being otherwise than poor; and the rich see no reason to fear that they will ever be otherwise than rich; and where the rich see no necessity to exert themselves in order to retain their riches; and where the poor are devoid of motive to exertion in order to raise themselves above their poverty—in the ordinary course of things, society must everywhere present an aspect of tranquillity. Opulence becomes familiar to the rich in such a state, much as poverty becomes familiar to the poor; and as both have learnt to look on their allotment as a sort of destiny, the tendency of both is to moderate their passions, and to regard their well-being as allied—not with excitement and effort, so much as with a cultivation of the habit of contentment and inaction.

But the state of society in the great commercial cities of the west is not of this order. The distinction between the high and the low in these communities is by no means so marked, or so fixed, as among the millions who have peopled the territories of Asia. Hereditary wealth and hereditary power are hardly known; and while the poor of to-day may become the rich of to-morrow, the rich of to-morrow may exhibit in their turn the same instability of fortune with many who have gone before them. It is where men feel that the evils of poverty may be thus surmounted, and that the most laboriously acquired

wealth may be thus insecure, that all the faculties and passions of the soul are in a condition to be summoned to the most ceaseless and vigorous activity.

It may be supposed that, in general, the men who are born to wealth do not look to it with such immoderate expectation of enjoyment from it, nor feel its loss so intensely when it happens to pass away from them, as the men who become wealthy purely by their own protracted vigilance and labour to that end. Hence we not unfrequently see nobles spurn the merely physical gratifications with which their wealth has surrounded them, in search of higher pleasures—the pleasures of literature, science, taste, or ambition; and we may often have had occasion to observe, that the decayed peer has commonly something more adequate to fall back upon, than the decayed merchant. In the case of the latter, the love of wealth—the passion which has grown stronger and stronger through many long years of acquisition—does not of course cease to exist, or even begin to abate, when acquisition has been realized. The circle of present enjoyment which wealth might command, was the object seen in the distance; and when obtained, it is valued in proportion to the cost which has been incurred in its favour.

It will appear in another place, that even in mental and moral habits of this nature, there are elements which may become favourable to religion. But in these habits we may discern something of the strength of those worldly passions which seem to find their natural home in the traffic of great cities, and which, in the case of multitudes, are indulged to the fatal neglect of the immaterial and everlasting!

The forms which these material indulgences assume will vary greatly, according to the means and tastes of the man who gives his heart to such things. Men account their condition prosperous, and derive pleasure from it, not so much from its relation to the condition of others, as from its relation to the past in their own history, and to the hopes which it might have been reasonable in them to cherish. The soul of one man clings as fondly to the comforts of his cottage, as does the soul of another to the luxuries of his palace. In both, the passion has respect to the sensual, and should be regarded as possessing a natural tendency to exclude all appreciation of the spiritual, and all aspiration toward the heavenly. The village festival, and the court pageant, are only different forms of the same moral danger. The physical gratifications belonging to a state of barbarism, and those attendant on comparative cultivation, and on the highest refinement, are only varied modes in which the different grades of mankind seek that kind of enjoyment which it is their disposition to push to such excess as to leave small space for thought in relation to the invisible and the future.

But it must not be supposed that this strength of feeling, in relation to the worldly, is likely to render man insensible, in any very marked degree, to the claims of a worldly morality. His solicitude to rise in the world will dispose him to a scrupulous observance of the laws of society, rather than prompt him to any violation of them. In this manner, the individual interest is made to harmonize with the general interest. The evil to be feared in the case of a great commercial people, is not so much that they will become a nation of swindlers,

as that they will become a nation of decent worldlings. Vice and crime may have too much place in the great cities of such a people, but the characteristics of the population in a large town, when it is viewed comprehensively, present, not the dominance of vice and crime, so much as the ascendancy of their opposites; and, even in respect to religion, it is seen, that the great danger is not so much that men will totally neglect it, as that they will be disposed to substitute the external in the place of the spiritual, so as to convert religion itself into another element of worldliness—the custom of going to church on Sunday becoming as much a matter of mere usage, as going at the appointed time to some meeting of poor-law guardians, or to take part in some registration or electioneering committee.

The crowds which make their way through the suburbs of our great cities toward the country on the Lord's day, especially in the neighbourhood of London, convey a most unfavourable impression with regard to the condition of the religious feeling in the case of a large proportion of our people, both in the lower and in the middle classes. On the continent, the Lord's day may appear to be still more generally and openly desecrated; but in catholic countries, such appearances are not so certainly the indications of irreligion as among ourselves. The Frenchman, who may be always seen in the theatre on the Sunday evening, may have been as punctual an attendant on mass, or on some other form of religious worship, in the morning. But with us, the presumption is, that the people who make the Lord's day, in any degree, a season for mere amusement or indulgence, are persons who use it to scarcely any other purpose. The

religion of the Catholic teaches him, that the evening of Sunday is no more sacred than the morning of Monday. With us it is not so, and the conclusion to be deduced, accordingly, from the manner in which Sunday is divested of all sanctity in the practice of many protestants, is a conclusion which necessarily precludes the idea that such persons can be possessed of any proper religious feeling.

Everything advanced in a preceding section, concerning the state of society in great cities, as including tendencies unfavourable to morals, might be repeated in this place—the causes which are unfavourable to morality being necessarily unfavourable to religion. Circumstances which facilitate vicious indulgence, facilitate, as a natural consequence, the formation of habits of impiety. If the religious be opposed to the immoral, it is inevitable that the immoral should be opposed to the religious. It is natural that men without morals should be men without faith. Their passions never fail to act as a bounty on the side of their scepticism.

It is observable, also, that through the fluctuations of commerce, multitudes accustomed to comparative comfort are sometimes reduced, on a sudden, to a state of deep poverty; and the ancient who prayed, "Give me neither poverty nor riches," knew that the condition of the necessitous was as little favourable to moral or spiritual improvement as that of the opulent. Wealth may corrupt men by rendering them sensual and effeminate, poverty may corrupt them by rendering them malignant and impious. In the former case, depravity is the result of good abused, in the latter it is induced by the feeling that good is withholden. In the one case, man sinks

into a worshipper of mere physical enjoyment ; in the other, he appears as the antagonist of his Maker and of his fellows. Pleasure is the corrupter of the one, pain is the corrupter of the other ; and while the tendency in the former instance is to subordinate the soul to the senses, the tendency in the latter is to give power and dominance to the passions of the heart, and, too commonly, to its most demoralizing evil passions.

But we repeat—it is not from those grosser vices which find concealment and a home in great cities, that evil is to be apprehended with regard to religion, so much as from the prevalence of those purely worldly habits which the circumstances of a commercial people must always, more or less, dispose them to cherish. Even this danger, also, has its origin in causes which are of a very mixed nature, and which carry with them tendencies much more favourable to religion than will be found elsewhere.

SECTION II.

ON THE STATE OF SOCIETY IN GREAT CITIES AS INCLUDING TENDENCIES FAVOURABLE TO RELIGION.

WE have seen that the estimate formed concerning the state of morals in our rural districts, is generally much more favourable than the real state of things would warrant. The same may be said, in at least an equal degree, with regard to the religion of those districts. If you look to any space embracing some twenty thousand agriculturists, it will be found that the number of them

who altogether neglect public worship is not inconsiderable ; and let the religious intelligence, and the religious feeling, of the numbers who do attend such worship, be compared with those of the same number attending as worshippers in the churches and chapels of our towns and cities, and, in this respect, as in almost every other, the scale will be seen to turn greatly in favour of a city population.

Parishes in which the clergyman is a man of piety and ability, and prompted to activity by humane feeling, may exhibit many pleasing instances of a simple-hearted and fervent Christianity. But in a country of large extent, and in connexion with institutions, and a state of society like our own, such parishes are almost of necessity the exception and not the rule. The church-going population in our agricultural districts have ever been, for the most part, grossly ignorant, superstitious, and sensual, exhibiting most of the vices of towns with few of their virtues, and more superstition than would be found in towns, with little of the enlightened religious feeling generally observable in such places.

Christianity distinguishes between formalism and religion. It counts the former as valueless, except as conducing to the latter. External worship, and the instruction connected with it, may be of such a complexion as to prove in a great degree favourable to social order, without communicating the knowledge peculiar to the gospel, so as to raise men to a properly Christian habit of thought and affection. But it is a sorry service which is rendered to men, when, as the best thing that may be done for them, they are taught to substitute a formal for a spiritual worship, and to cherish the dreams of super-

stitution, as founded on the supposed efficacy of priestly offices, in the place of that "better hope" which is nourished by the exercises of a Christian intelligence and Christian feeling.

It would not, as we think, be difficult to shew, that much—very much the greater part of the religious culture existing in agricultural districts in this country, has been called into existence by an agency sent forth from our towns and cities—either by that agency directly, or by means of effort which would not have been made except as provoked by such agency. The tendencies of a purely agricultural state of society are nearly all on the side of torpor and deterioration; and in the matter of religion it is so even more than in most things beside.

In cities, and especially in cities which attain to commercial greatness, the danger is of an opposite description, arising from too great a confidence in the apparently boundless resources and powers of the human mind. But even on this point, we see error not so much in regard to principle, as in regard to its application, or to the proper mode and space of its development. Progression is characteristic of the human intellect, a progression to which the intellect itself can hardly assign any limit. The error consists, in not looking for the scene of this progression in the church, rather than in the world, in eternity rather than in time. Where society is broken up into castes, and each man comes into the world to fill the narrow space appointed to him, and a space the boundary of which he dares not attempt to pass over, we there see human nature at the farthest remove from being influenced by this doctrine of progression. The solicitude in such a state of society

is to perpetuate sameness, not to realize change ; and what is complete in this respect where the divisions of caste are complete, is powerful wherever aristocracy is powerful. Not that an aristocracy would tell you that they wholly despair of human improvement, but they would restrict the desirable in that shape to such narrow limits, as to assure you that in everything material the future must be as the past.

Such is not the faith which obtains among the people engaged in conducting the commerce of great cities. The sagacity, courage, and self-reliance, necessary to the success of such undertakings, are all in harmony with the doctrine of human responsibility as inculcated in Holy Writ ; and the idea of progressive culture and achievement, as to constitute the history of the human mind, is no less consonant with the lessons which teach us that the path of the just shall be as "the morning light, shining more and more to the perfect day," with the lessons which promise the universal prevalence of true religion among men, and with those which reveal heaven itself as a scene of ceaseless action and advancement.

The state of society in which men are seen rising every day through their forethought and effort, or falling through their inconsiderateness and indolence ; in which the inventions of to-day are admired and appropriated, but in the full expectation that they will be superseded by something more successful to-morrow ; and in which the direction of the mind is in consequence not so much to look toward what has been done in the past, as toward the distant intimations of what is likely to be done in the future,—this assuredly is no state of things in which to set forth religion as consisting in a dull

round of antiquated ceremonies, in which the priest and the institute perform everything, and the worshipper nothing. But let the idea of progressiveness be precluded from the notion of society, and the report of history is, that the intellectual must then be precluded from religion. Wherever the affairs of civil life become matters of unreflective routine, religion degenerates to the same level. Passiveness in the one department becomes the parent of passiveness in the other. Or it may be that the converse of all this will prove true—the religion which was suffered to retain its ascendancy while the elements of society were passive, being cast off as an incubus when its elements have become active.

We know that men may carry this doctrine to excess. They may not be sufficiently mindful in their private speculations, that “the race is not always to the swift nor the battle to the strong.” They may expect more, also, from the unaided intellect of man, in relation to human affairs, than will ever be realized from that source. But we hold that, on the whole, the state of society which tasks the reasoning power of man so as to call it forth in its largest development is that which must prove most favourable both to morality and religion, as certainly as that the service of both is eminently a reasonable service. The doctrine of perfectibility, which has had its place in the dreams of philosophy, has its proper object in the scriptural doctrine of a millennium, and still more in the scriptural revelation of a future state. It is not less in the nature of the freedom and intelligence which follow in the train of successful commerce, to put the mind upon a course in which it learns, in relation to secular affairs, to “forget the things that

are behind, and to press toward those which lie before," than it is in the nature of religion to seize on the habit thus formed, and to give it consecration, by directing it toward the improvement of society as to be effected by religion, and toward the world in which the spirits of the just are made perfect by religion.

We may next observe, that in the power of calculation with regard to self-interest, and in the kind of self-government, which, in the case of the manufacturer and trader is generally seen to be attendant on that power, we may discern another habit, which, if it sometimes degenerates into a most rooted selfishness, becomes subservient more frequently to the discipline imposed by morality and religion. It is a difficult thing to bring men to think and reason in any form, still more to bring them to do so with closeness and constancy, and, most of all, to do thus with a view to acts of severe self-denial. But commerce is familiarizing its multitudes to exercises of this nature every day. It is constantly teaching men that thought and labour, during the years immediately before them, present the only path to repose and enjoyment during the years in the distance. Men are thus taught, that in relation to the affairs of the world, no less than to the affairs of religion, the man who would be successful "must take up his cross and deny himself." In the case of no people, perhaps, is this doctrine more strikingly illustrated than in the history of the Anglo-Americans. The discipline to which the communities of the United States are accustomed in relation to their secular interests, is the strict counterpart of the discipline required from them in relation to their spiritual interests; and in the northern

states of that union—in great part too as the consequence of this fact—we find some of the most industrious and religious portions of the modern world, the industry of the people being favourable to their piety, and their piety in its turn being favourable to their industry. The wisdom of such a community in regard to the things of this world, is not in itself a fault, and it has only to be carried out to its legitimate extent to make them wise as the children of light.

Nor must the estimate formed by such a people concerning the value of money, and of those physical enjoyments which money may command, be accounted as altogether mistaken and pernicious. Time was, when religion seemed to have its connexion with man in this world for scarcely any other end than to mark his faults, and to inflict its penances upon him. The body was regarded as a foe to the soul, and the earth as a foe to heaven, in a sense never taught in the Christian Scriptures. The virtues of religion, which must always include self-denial, were then made to consist in scarcely anything beside. The doctrine which forbids the abuse of the world was so strained as to preclude the use of it; and, as the natural consequence, society seemed to be made up of two extreme classes—profligates and penitents. The greater spaces of life were given to every sort of licence, the lesser to fasts, and other forms of voluntary suffering. Religion was a yoke much too heavy to be borne by men in general for any long time together, and it became, accordingly, the exception in human life, in place of being the rule. Thus the religion that should have governed by love, governed by fear; and in holding out its visions concerning “the life to come,”

it seemed to have no promise to make concerning "the life that now is."

This was not the Christianity of Holy Scripture, but Christianity divested of its proper character by a rude and corrupt state of society. The good announced in the gospel has respect to the secular allotment of men, as certainly as to their spiritual hopes; and to happiness as to be derived from religion on earth, no less plainly than to happiness as to be perfected from that source in heaven. The body is from God in common with the soul, the visible in common with the invisible; and it is as truly the duty of men to use the temporal good which the Divine hand has bestowed upon them, as to abstain from the abuse of it.

The old philosophical doctrine, which taught that evil is necessarily inherent in matter, is no Christian doctrine. It does honour to one-half of the works of deity at the cost of the other half, and by separating what God has united, spreads confusion and mischief everywhere. Protestantism, and its natural offspring—commerce, have done much to disenthral men from errors of this nature. It was unavoidable, in the history of the change which has taken place in this respect, that many should err through excess in the opposite direction; but multitudes have shown that they knew how to halt somewhere near the right point; and if religion is ever to be diffused in a form adapted to elevate society at large, it must be religion divested, after this manner, of the gloom and asceticism which the monks of the middle age borrowed from the disciples of the old oriental philosophy. We may rest assured, that in no connexion will follies of this nature obtain so little

patronage, as among the crowds who busy themselves with manufactures and commerce.

Another favourable tendency in regard to religion, observable in modern society, may be perceived in the manner in which men have been prepared to discountenance the superstition which attaches an undue importance to the small matters of religious observance. The great and the only adequate corrective to the evils which belong to the state of society adverted to, is religion, and religion, not as consisting in a round of mere forms, but as including real enlightenment, and a consciousness of moral and spiritual improvement; and it may be observed in respect to the mental habits of men engaged in large and varied occupation, that even when it does not dispose them to conform to such a religion, it always tends to satisfy them that a religion of that nature is the only one to which it would be rational to conform.

If the danger in such a state of society is on the side of an excessive feeling in the form of self-dependence and isolation, this may be effectually counteracted by a devout recognition of that Hand which "setteth up one and putteth down another;" and if such circumstances often dispose men to look with too much intentness on the means of present enjoyment, the only remedy in that case is in "the greater things than these" which are set before them by revelation.

Now the circumstances which expose men to these evils, serve to bring them in a special manner under the influence of this divinely appointed remedy. Never are men more impatient of the mockery which raises the shadows of religion into the place of its substance, than when they participate in the intelligence and in-

dependence derived from commercial prosperity. To have become thus distinguished, the intellect must have assumed a manly texture, such as, in the general, would be deeply offended by the puerile attempts which are sometimes made to convert religion into so much idle pageantry. Speaking of such communities generally, we may allege that they will have a religion of some practical and moral worth, or they will have none. In the United States, where this condition of society is the most general, catholicism is prevalent, and is diffusing itself daily, but it is a catholicism in which the grosser superstitions, and the more frivolous forms of that system, are greatly more abated than in any other country within the domain of the papacy. As the condition of men becomes more equal, saintship declines, and theism becomes more duly ascendant; and in all matters of worship, the spirit comes more and more into the place of the letter.

Nor is it either reasonable or philosophical to suppose, that among a commercial people, placed under the influence of Christianity, worshippers of this order will be few. Where manufactures spread themselves, the very face of nature may sometimes seem to be obscured; and it may be admitted, that the multitudes who crowd the streets and lanes of our large towns, are in a condition little favourable to a salutary impression from the visible works of the Infinite. But these evils are only partially attendant on systems of manufacture: and wherever you find man, you may appeal to that deeply-laid religious instinct within him, which, as he well knows, it was no work of his own hand to implant, and which no power at his disposal will suffice to eradicate.

To stand in awe of the Infinite, to feel some craving toward the Everlasting, is not so much his choice as his destiny. Wholly to resist the voice which comes to him, as through a thousand channels, with its messages from the greater and the higher than himself, can scarcely pertain to his history, except it be as the madness which is at length permitted to those whose doom is to be destroyed.

In some circumstances men may be more disposed to religious scepticism than in others, and at some seasons more than at other seasons; but if history has made any certain report to man on this subject, it is to the effect, that the choice before human nature is not so much between the true religion and no religion, as between the true religion and a false one. Everywhere man has had a religion, everywhere he will continue to have a religion, and the choice left to society will relate to the comparative claims of the different systems which assume the name of religion. In the theory of the infidel, all religions are alike false, being so many devices of man. They *are*, accordingly, *what* they are, because man *is*, what he is, and because the means of knowledge accessible to man, are such as they have been. It must follow, therefore, according to this theory, that were all the existing systems of delusion consigned to oblivion to-morrow, human nature remaining the same, and its circumstances being the same, the void so created, would be readily filled up by precisely the same thing over again. When men are sure that they have a new humanity to begin with, and a new physical system for that humanity to act upon, then,

and not till then, may they hold out the promise of a "new moral world."

The strong presumptive argument from these facts, is not so much that all religions are false, as that some religion must be true. They are facts which show that aptitude for religion is inseparable from humanity, inseparable from it as a law of the Creator, and that man, accordingly, was designed to be religious. In all other connexions the aptitude has its object. Hence the manner in which our senses connect us with the material world. And is it in the instance of the highest aptitude of our nature, that which has respect to religion, and in that instance alone, that this great law must be supposed to have wholly failed? This would be a hard saying—who could hear it?

Atheism has not found it possible to acquire any footing among men in the face of the rebukes that are poured upon it from the light of nature. Christianity, which came into alliance with the most cultivated order of intellect from the time of its birth, has retained that alliance for nearly two thousand years. In denouncing atheism, the wise and the unwise have been of one mind; and wherever man has been most capable of detecting imposture, and most disposed to employ himself in making such detections, there Christianity has found its natural home—been received as true, honoured as divine. Were it false, as the other religious systems of the world are false, its better nature, its better tendency, and its better evidence, would seem to proclaim it as the destined religion of civilized man—as the religion most proper to the wisest and the

strongest among the instructed nations of the earth. But it is not false. It will survive and triumph, not simply because it is the best, nor even because it is true, but, most of all, because it carries with it a divine power, pledged to its preservation, and to its ultimate ascendancy in all nations.

Commerce and manufactures have done more toward realizing that ascendancy during the last two centuries, than had been done by feudalism during the thousand years preceding. The effect of those forms of industry in giving to the Christianity of Europe a greater degree of purity and power, and the degree in which they have contributed to bring the other continents of the globe into connexion with Europe, exhibit a grand preliminary movement, the results of which will no doubt have their place among the great facts pertaining to the later history of our species. The United States, and the colonial empire of Great Britain, have been called into existence during the interval mentioned, and mainly as the effect of commercial industry.

With this great fact in the history of modern Europe, we might connect a multitude of lesser facts, as they present themselves in different localities, all tending to the same conclusion. Indeed, so far is it from being in the nature of the system of manufactures to render men indifferent to religion, that where that system obtains, much more is manifestly done to uphold and diffuse religion than is done in neighbourhoods of a different description. It is found in such places, that the edifices raised both by the state and by the more wealthy of the land for public worship, are not so numerous as are those which owe their existence to the voluntary effort of the people.

themselves. Some of the people in such districts—at times considerable portions of them—may suffer themselves to be ensnared by the artifices of designing men ; but the religious statistics both of England and Scotland, show that the religious feeling is nowhere so powerful as in the places where large bodies of men are brought together for purposes of handicraft and trade.* In North America this state of society is everywhere, while provision by the state for the support of religion is nowhere ; and in several of the states of that union we nevertheless find some of the most religious communities on earth. Should it not be enough to know, in contemplating this state of society, or any other state, that the religious instinct in man is imperishable, that Christianity can be demonstrated as true, and that a Divine power is promised to render its benignant provisions impressive and effectual ?

Some instructive observations, bearing upon this subject, occur in Dr. Taylor's " Notes " on the manufacturing districts of Lancashire. " In Manchester," says our author, " the men are as business-like as the place, and in their character a zeal for religion, charity, and science, is not less conspicuous than are the buildings consecrated to those objects in the town. I might adduce as proofs the subscriptions to the fund for building churches, to the methodist Centenary fund, to the funds for relieving the citizens of Hamburgh, for erecting the Lancashire Independent College, for supporting the numerous literary and scientific institutions in the town and its neighbourhood ; nor will gratitude permit me

* For some valuable statistical information on this subject, see the Appendix.

to omit the hospitable and magnificent reception given to the members of the British Association at its late meeting in Manchester, though the visit was paid at a season of general depression and great commercial distress."

" — It is not easy to fix upon a statistical test for measuring the intelligence of the operatives, (at Turton.) I found clocks and small collections of books in all their dwellings ; several had wheel-barometers ; and in one house I noticed a hygrometer of very delicate construction. The books were for the most part on religious subjects ; next to the Bible I found that Thomas à Kempis is the greatest favourite with the people of Lancashire. Nowhere did I see a book of immoral or even questionable tendency, unless the writings of the Mormonites or Latter-day Saints may be considered as such, for this strange form of fanaticism, which we have imported from America, appears to be taking deep root in Lancashire. Enthusiasm in everything, indeed, appears to be a marked characteristic of this branch of the Saxon race, and it is equally manifested in new forms of religion, and in new forms of machinery."

" — I found that the Messrs. W — were Methodists : they took me to see the chapel which had been erected in Hollymount, a building of the Ionic order, and which to me, uninitiated in the rules of art, appeared one of the prettiest specimens of the modern imitations of Grecian architecture I have seen. The interior of the chapel struck me as superior in arrangement and picturesque effect to any of the modern churches in the Grecian style I have yet seen. I should very much wish to have seen it when lighted, and I am not without

hope that I may yet have this pleasure, for, if I ever can, I shall repeat my visit to Rossendale and Holmymount. The pulpit, reading-desk, and communion-table, are of mahogany, of that beautiful kind which is, I believe, called ‘tulip-wood.’ Whatever may be its name, I do not think that either in material or workmanship it is surpassed in this country. I have dwelt, perhaps disproportionately, on this chapel, because I can never forget the observation which one of the Messrs. W—— made to my companion when asked respecting the cost of the building. ‘It pleased God,’ said he, ‘to extend peculiar blessings to us, who were left fatherless at an early age in the care of a widowed mother. When we had been so far favoured in our exertions as to enable us to build the three houses on yonder hill, we felt that the author of our prosperity ought not to be worshipped in a house inferior to that in which we dwell.’ Mr. W—— spoke as if he had been thinking aloud: the sentence had scarcely passed his lips when he manifestly showed that he felt as if what he said might expose him to the imputation of self-praise; he at once changed the conversation, nor could he by any possible effort be got to renew it.”

“ROSENDALE FOREST.—For the first time since I left home, the sun had risen upon the earth some hours before I came down stairs this morning. In prosperous times a lover of his kind could have enjoyed few greater pleasures than that which would have been offered to him by the spectacle presented by a Sunday in one of the forest villages. Infidelity and socialism have made great progress in Manchester, and in some other towns of South Lancashire, but the plague has as yet extended

but very partially into the forest. It was delightful to see the crowds of well-dressed individuals and families coming from their cottages and proceeding to their respective places of worship, with the aspect and demeanour of persons who felt that they were engaged in an act of solemn duty. I was informed that, in seasons of distress, the Foresters will sacrifice everything before they part with their Sunday clothes ; and that they will cheerfully starve, during the entire week, in order to make a decent appearance when 'they go up to the house of the Lord.' They belong to a great variety of sects, a small proportion only being members of the church, the sobriety of our ordinances being probably too tame for the fiery energy and enthusiasm which forms so conspicuous an element in their character. To the same cause I should be disposed to attribute the disproportionate amount of congregational singing in their public worship, and the tendency to rant and extravagance which is very observable in their extempore prayers. Having always considered sincerity of every kind a most valuable quality, I cannot bring myself to condemn the enthusiasm of the Foresters, although I deem it excessive : it is easier to tame down this heat than to animate apathy and coldness. I was much struck by the attention of the operatives to their children : the little urchins were all clean and very neatly dressed, which is not to be wondered at, as the benevolent proprietor of the print works at Crashaw Booth supplies his work-people with the *fents*, or overlenghts of cloth, at a price rather less than the cost of production. It was amusing to see the imps mimicking the solemn air and steady step of their parents, but every

now and then yielding to some sudden ebullition of youthful gaiety, and indulging in a frisky gambol which sadly disturbed the grave uniformity of the march.

“In the evening I strolled through the village, and admired the orderly and peaceful demeanour of its inhabitants. In some houses the parents were reading the Bible to their families; in others the neighbours had assembled to sing hymns together; in more than one the voice of prayer was heard supplicating the Author of mercy to have compassion upon the suffering nation. The speakers used the sentiments, if not the very words, of the elegiac prophet: ‘Thou, O Lord, remainest for ever; thy throne from generation to generation; wherefore dost thou forget us ever, and forsake us so long time? Turn thou us unto thee, O Lord, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old!’ How naturally the fine orientalisms of the Old Testament identify themselves with deep and highly-wrought feelings. In our days we are too apt to ridicule the excessive use of scriptural phraseology by the puritans and the covenanters: in our tame age we cannot comprehend the perfect sincerity of those men: they were throughout in earnest, they ever meant what they said. Let me add that their spirit still survives in the country; and that I have often heard among the operatives the sentiments which Campbell has embodied in the well-known lines—

‘ We’re the sons of sires that baffled
Crown’d and mitred tyranny;
They defied the sword and scaffold
For their birthrights—so will we.’

“During the civil wars they were distinguished for the zeal and energy they threw into their enthusiasm,

and in our own days, the fever of political excitement has nowhere risen to a higher heat than in the principal towns of this county. A spirit which is at once so excitable and so sturdy seems to have a natural tendency to emancipate itself from fixed forms; at least, it would require very delicate management to keep it within the pale of an establishment. Dissent once begun could not easily be checked, for the Lancastrians are equally obstinate and sincere—the latter quality being proved by the largeness of their contributions to various religious institutions and charities.

“ — I think, and, indeed, I have very good reason to believe, that the progress of socialism and infidelity has been effectually checked in the manufacturing districts. The pressure of affliction has induced many who were previously negligent of religion ‘to turn unto the Lord their God,’ as a Being who has declared himself ‘gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and who repenteth him of the evil.’ In the houses of the needy and the afflicted, I have often-found the Bible the last piece of furniture remaining. I have heard the miserable proclaim the patience they have learned from its precepts, and the consolation they have derived from its promises. If any man doubted the benefits which Christianity has conferred on mankind, he would be cured of his scepticism by witnessing its soothing influence on the distress and suffering in Lancashire.”*

* Pp. 8, 31, 61, 62, 88—92, 293, 297.

SECTION III.

ON THE COMPARATIVE PROSPECT OF CATHOLICISM
AND PROTESTANTISM.

WE hear much, almost every day, concerning the revival of Catholicism. It is said to be diffusing itself, as with new vigour, in Britain, on the Continent, in the United States, and in many of our Colonies. There may be much exaggeration in these representations—among Protestant alarmists on the one side, and among Catholic zealots on the other. But that there is a considerable revival of zeal within the pale of the Roman-catholic church, and that the members of that church are extending her cords and strengthening her stakes, in the hope that her tent may soon be made to embrace a much larger multitude, is not to be doubted.

But the increase of Catholicism is a matter which is sure not to come without observation. In countries where Catholics are the great majority, any increase of zeal to make proselytes must become the more conspicuous as being that of the greater number; while the disposition toward pomp and display, on the part of the Catholic, must tend to give more notoriety to the achievements of such zeal in his case, than among the disciples of Protestantism. It must be a very general, and a very powerful effort indeed, on the part of the million and a half of Protestants in France, which should be found to attract as much of public attention, as would be secured by a much feeblér movement as affecting the proportion of the remaining thirty millions who profess themselves

Catholics. The increased energy displayed by Catholicism in Great Britain, we regard as feeble, compared with that which has been evinced by Protestantism during the last half century—the converts occasionally made to Catholicism being of little weight, as opposed to the multitudes who have been raised during that interval from a state of mere formalism, or of gross irreligion, to the profession of a Protestantism based upon instruction and allied with devout feeling.

Still, the great fact remains—the church of Rome, which during the eighteenth century was constantly declining, not only continues to exist, but, notwithstanding all that was done by the wars of the French Revolution to deprive her of her wealth, to break down her machinery, and to threaten the extinction even of her spiritual power, she possesses at this moment a stronger hold on the sympathies and homage of Catholic Europe, than she could boast when vested in all her wonted splendour a century since. We see her doing much everywhere toward regaining, in her adversity, the influence which she lost in her prosperity. The comparative power of Catholicism at the present time, may be in part explained by the fact, that the revolutionary outbreak from which it suffered so greatly, was one hostile to Christianity in every form. Protestantism, accordingly, has suffered from it fully as much as Catholicism. Both these systems, moreover, had deteriorated greatly, before the sweep of the memorable desolation adverted to passed over them; and when the storm at length subsided, as amidst the last faint cries of the wounded and the dying at Waterloo, the mind of Europe was in no condition to resume attention to subjects of this nature speedily.

Since that day a quarter of a century has now intervened, and, during this space, the men whose social and mental habits had been moulded and fixed by the long military age which preceded, have almost disappeared, and their place is, at present, pretty well supplied by a generation whose attention has been occupied mainly with questions of diplomacy and domestic policy, and with such matters as popular education, scientific improvement, and intellectual culture in its higher forms. With this change has come a new disposition, and a new power to prosecute investigations in respect to religion ; and the result now is, a marked revival of religious feeling in Europe—but a revival of this feeling, with a tendency, in many quarters, not so much to connect itself with the purer form of Christianity which is traced in modern history to the age of Luther, as with the more ideal and superstitious system against which Luther raised his solemn protest.

One thing is certain—the Catholicism which is diffused in an age like the present, must be a widely different system from the Catholicism which has been prevalent in most of the ages preceding. The church of Rome has always known how to adapt her policy to every social variety and change in the past, and she will not be less expert in this respect in relation to the present and the future. It has always been her manner to appear in sackcloth, or in gorgeous attire, as the occasion might demand. Notwithstanding all her pretension to the infallible and the immutable, even her theory of power has risen or fallen according to the times and the seasons. In all things, she has known how to be more superstitious, or less so, as the people could be expected to bear it. Inflexible

on a few points, she has reserved to herself a wide range of things, in regard to which large concession might be made without any sacrifice of dignity or safety. In the language of an author already cited,—“The Catholic religion is a net which adapts its meshes to the minnow or the whale. The Lazarone on his knees before a child's doll in a glass case, and praying fervently to the Bellissima Madonna, is a Catholic, as well as Gibbon, Stolberg, or Schlegel ; but his Catholicism is little, if at all, removed from an idolatrous faith in the image before him, which may, in its time, have represented a Diana of Ephesus, or a Venus. Their Catholicism was the result of the investigation of philosophic minds, and which, however erroneous, could have had nothing in common with that of the ignorant Lazarone. I strolled one Sunday evening, in Prussia, into the Roman-catholic church in Bonn, on the Rhine ; the priest was catechising, examining, and instructing the children of the parish, in the same way, and upon the same plan, and with the same care to awaken the intellectual powers of each child by appropriate questions and explanations, as in our well-conducted Sunday schools, that are taught on the system of the Edinburgh sessional schools. And what, of all subjects, was the subject which this Catholic priest was explaining and inculcating to Catholic children ; and, by his familiar questions and their answers, bringing most admirably home to their intelligence ?—The total uselessness and inefficacy of mere forms of prayer, or verbal repetitions of prayers, if not understood and accompanied by mental occupation with the subject, and the preference of silent mental prayer to all forms—and this most beautifully brought out to suit the intelligence of the

children. I looked around me to be satisfied that I was really at the altar-steps of a popish church, and not in the school-room of Dr. Muir's, or any other well-taught presbytery of any parish in Edinburgh. Yet beside me, on her knees before the altar, was an old crone mumbling her Pater Nosters, and keeping tale of them by her beads, and whose mind was evidently intent on accomplishing so many repetitions, without attaching any meaning to the words. Between her Catholicism, and that of the pastor, and the new generation he was teaching, there was certainly a mighty chasm, a distance that in the Protestant church, or in a former age, would have given ample room for half-a-dozen sects and shades of dissent—a difference as great as between the Puseyite branch of the Church of England, and the Roman-catholic church itself. But the mantle of the Catholic faith is elastic, and covers all sorts of differences, and hides all sorts of disunion. Each understands the Catholic religion in his own way, and remains classed as Catholic, without dissent, although, in reality, as widely apart from the old Catholic church, as ever Luther was from the pope.”*

“I showed, in my former volumes,” says DeTocqueville, “how the American clergy stand aloof from secular affairs. This is the most obvious, but it is not the only example of their self-restraint. In America, religion is a distinct sphere, in which the priest is sovereign, but out of which he takes care never to go. Within its limits, he is the master of the mind ; beyond them he leaves men to themselves, and surrenders them to the

* Laing's Notes, &c. &c. pp. 445, 446.

independence and instability which belongs to their nature and their age. I have seen no country in which Christianity is clothed with fewer forms, figures, and observances, than in the United States; or where it presents more distinct, more simple, or more general notions to the mind. Although the Christians of America are divided into a multitude of sects, they all look upon their religion in the same light. This applies to Roman Catholicism as well as to the other forms of belief. There are no Romish priests who show less taste for the minute individual observances, for extraordinary or peculiar means of salvation, or who cling more to the spirit and less to the letter of the law, than the Roman-catholic priests of the United States. Nowhere is that doctrine of the church, which prohibits the worship reserved to God alone, from being offered to the saints, more clearly inculcated or more generally followed.”*

These passages, from the pens of intelligent men, reporting on what they have seen, indicate very plainly one source of the continued power of Catholicism. It is, in great part, through ceasing to be the system which generated Protestantism, that Catholicism prevails as in the face of Protestantism, and sometimes at its cost. The above extracts show what is passing in this form among the Roman Catholics of Prussia and of the United States, countries in which Catholicism has to prosecute its course, as under the vigilant and jealous oversight of a powerful Protestantism. The same signs of improvement would not, perhaps, be so readily detected in Portugal or Spain. But wherever the same cause operates,

* Democracy in America, iii. 51, 52.

the same effect is more or less visible. The heresy of Luther has been the regenerator of the religion of the pontiffs; and it may well be matter of congratulation among Protestants, that the effect of their labours should be scarcely more memorable as seen in the church which they have constituted, than as seen in the change which they have induced within the pale of the church against which they have protested. Protestantism has not succeeded in putting an end to Popery, but it has succeeded in extruding from it not a little of its ancient nature; and the glory of Protestantism in the ages to come will be, that it will defeat its antagonist directly or indirectly—either directly, by forcing it from the field, or indirectly, by compelling it to become less and less the system it has been. Its policy has generally been, to perpetuate ignorance wherever that might be done, but to place itself in alliance with civilization and progress, to almost any extent, when that may seem to be demanded by the spirit of the times. Proud as it may be, its province, in the great path of human improvement, has been to follow, and not to lead. But all movement in that direction is a good, however faulty the motive from which it may proceed.

Whatever may be our judgment with regard to the celibacy of the clergy, considered in its bearing on morals, its influence as a matter of ecclesiastical discipline has no doubt been eminently favourable to the greatness and permanence of the papal power. It must be supposed, that in rude or corrupt times, vows of that nature have not always been followed by a very religious observance. But it is not reasonable to conclude that the violation of such obligations has been frequent, where the condition

of society has been such as readily to detect such delinquencies, and to visit them, when detected, with marked reprehension. So far as they relate to the individual, and to society, we hold the moral effects of such vows to be pernicious. When not allied with habits of gross licentiousness—as they have often been—they may cause the feeling of the man to become lost in that of the priest; and in place of bringing a more tender, and a larger humanity, into the relation between the priest and the worshipper, they may substitute in its stead the pride, the gloom, and the acerbity, characteristic of the monk. The church may be the gainer even in such case, but the gain is unnatural, inasmuch as it is at the cost of society.

In the esteem of the multitude, however, and in the esteem of many who rise above that level, self-denial in this form, in common with self-denial in every form, is likely to be valued according to its supposed amount, and according to the supposed goodness of the object which is regarded as subserved by it. Wherever men are believed to be sincere in this professed separation from all the ordinary relationships and cares of the present world, in order that they may the better secure their own interests, and the interests of others, in relation to the world to come, it is to be presumed that such supposed self-denial will give to the men regarded as living in the practice of it a commanding influence. To them, the church is as the object of their espousals, and the people to whom they minister are in the place of children.

Nor does the effect of this article of discipline terminate in producing impressions of this nature in favour

of the Catholic priesthood, nor even in causing that priesthood to be devoted, with a degree of ardour and exclusiveness peculiar to themselves, to their own world of ecclesiastical matters as distinguished from everything beside in the affairs of men. The church not only realizes a more zealous, and, in many respects, a more competent force, by such means, but does so at comparatively small cost. Where there is no family enthrallment, there is no family expenditure. The outlay necessary to support from twenty to thirty Protestant families, would be enough to maintain a hundred Catholic priests. Whenever economy in this form becomes necessary, Catholicism has it at her bidding.

Of this economy the Roman-catholic church has had large occasion to avail herself during the last half century. Her ancient wealth is gone, and the causes which have brought her into a comparatively impoverished condition, have left her little beside her moral influence as an element of power. "In no Catholic country, for instance, not even in Rome, is the interference of the church, or the clergy, in private concerns, or civil affairs, opinions, or doings of individuals, at all tolerated. Its establishments and powers discordant with the civil authority, have everywhere been abrogated. Monks and nuns are no longer very numerous, except in Rome and Naples, and are nowhere a scandal; and the vast estates of these establishments have, generally, over all the Continent been, in the course of the last war, confiscated and sold to pay the public debt of the state. In Tuscany, for instance, of 202 monastic establishments—viz., 133 of monks, and 69 of nuns, only 40 remain with means for their future support and continuance, and 162 receive

aid from government, until the existing members who survive the confiscation of their former estates die out. The rich Neapolitan monasteries have, in the same way, been reduced in wealth and numbers. In France and Germany the Catholic clergy, in general, are by no means in brilliant circumstances. The obnoxious and useless growth of the Catholic church establishment has, in almost every country, been pruned; and their clergy are in reality worse provided for than the Protestant. The effects of the Revolution have been to reverse the position of the clergy of the two churches; and to place the Catholic now on the vantage ground in the eye of the vulgar of the continental populations, of being poor and sincere, while the Protestant clergy are, at least, comfortable, and well paid for their sincerity. The sleek, fat, narrow-minded, wealthy drone, is now to be sought for on the episcopal bench, or in the prebendal stall of the Lutheran or Anglican churches; the well-off, comfortable parish minister, yeoman-like in mind, intelligence, and social position, in the manse and glebe of the Calvinistic church. The poverty-stricken, intellectual recluse, never seen abroad, but on his way to or from his studies or church duties, living nobody knows how, but all know in the poorest manner, upon a wretched pittance in his obscure abode—and this is the Popish priest of the nineteenth century—has all the advantage of position with the multitude for giving effect to his teaching.

“Our clergy, especially in Scotland, have a very erroneous impression of the state of the Popish clergy. In our country churches we often hear them prayed for as men wallowing in luxury, and sunk in gross ignorance. This is somewhat injudicious, as well as uncharitable;

for when the youth of their congregations, who, in this travelling age, must often come in contact abroad with the Catholic clergy so described, find them in learning, liberal views, and genuine piety, according to their own doctrines, so very different from the description and the describers, there will unavoidably arise comparisons in the minds, especially of females and young susceptible persons, by no means edifying, or flattering to their clerical teachers at home. Catholic priests and monks may have been, at the time of the Reformation, all that our Scotch clergy fancy them still to be ; but three centuries, a French Revolution, and an incessant advance of intelligence in society, make a difference for the better or worse, in the spirit even of clerical corporations. Our churchmen should understand better the strength of a formidable adversary, who is evidently gaining ground but too fast on our Protestant church, and who, in this age, brings into the field, zeal and purity of life equal to their own, and learning, a training in theological scholarship, and general knowledge, superior, perhaps, to their own. The education of the regular clergy of the Catholic church is, perhaps, positively higher, and, beyond doubt, comparatively higher than the education of the Scotch clergy. By positively higher is meant, that among a given number of Popish and of Scotch clergy, a greater proportion of the former will be found, who read with ease, and a perfect mastery, the ancient languages, Greek and Latin, and the Hebrew and the Eastern languages connected with that of the Old Testament—a greater number of profound scholars, a greater number of high mathematicians, and a higher average amount of acquired knowledge.

“Is it asked, of what use to the preacher of the gospel is such obsolete worldly scholarship? The ready answer is, that if the parish minister of the Scotch church can no more read the Evangelists, Apostles, and early Fathers, easily and masterly in the original Greek, than any other man in the parish,—knows them only from the translations and books in our mother tongue, to which every reading man in the parish has access as well as he,—and if he has not had his mental faculties cultivated and improved by a long course of application to such studies as mathematics, the dead languages, scholastic learning, ancient doctrines in philosophy and morals, the ancient history of mind and men, and the laws of matter and intelligence as far as known to man, on what grounds does he challenge deference and respect for his opinions from us his parishioners? We are educated up to him. How can he instruct a congregation who know him to be as ignorant as themselves? Has the ordination of a presbytery conferred on the half-educated lad any miraculous gifts or knowledge? If he be as ignorant as his hearers of these higher branches of knowledge, which few have his leisure to arrive at, what is it he does know? What is the education, what the acquirements on which a presbytery, not better educated than himself, have examined and licensed him? He is like an apothecary ignorant of chemistry, compounding his medicines from a book of formulæ left in his shop by his predecessor, and without any knowledge of the nature of the substances he is handling. It may be said that the standard of clerical education in Scotland is as high as it ever was—as high as in any generation since the Reformation. It may be so, but if the

public has become educated up to that standard, the clergy of the present day have lost the vantage-ground of superior education and learning, and consequently of moral influence as teachers, as much as if the standard of clerical education had itself been lowered."*

In this description the scale is made to turn more favourably, as I suspect, on the side of Catholicism, than a closer examination of the subject would warrant. Still, regarding this shewing as being only substantially just, in this altered position of the two churches, we may discern one of the great facts in the ecclesiastical history of the nineteenth century. It is also another great fact belonging to the history of religion in our age, that Romanism should thus have shewn itself to be at least as powerful, both intellectually and morally, in its present state of comparative poverty, and of social weakness, as Protestantism would appear to be, with all the aid of its larger endowments, and of its greater social advantages. What has taken place in this respect, in its strongest form, in Ireland, is taking place, more or less, over Europe. When a religion, connected with a high order of intelligence, is seen to maintain its ground, and to make acquisitions, not merely without secular advantage, but in the face of secular disparagement, it is natural that men should regard its stability and progress as a proclamation of its intrinsic power. In the times which are opening upon us, it will not be safe that the endowed churches of Protestantism should evade, as they have been too prone to do, the kind of labour to which they are challenged by this well-disciplined and determined adversary; nor will it suffice that the unendowed

* Laing's Notes, &c, pp. 434—437.

churches professing the Protestant faith, should limit their solitudes, after the manner of the past, to a decent performance of their average duties.

The effect of these easy circumstances in the case of the larger portion of the Protestant clergy, has been to render them indolent, indisposed to movement themselves, and indisposed to favour it in others; and so strong has been their tendency to lean on the supposed stability of the state, rather than upon the supposed changeableness of the people, that they have come to be very widely regarded as the ministers of the state, more than as the ministers of the people. Catholicism, on the other hand, little aided, or perhaps openly discountenanced by the governing, has made use of every means to entrench itself within the affections of the governed: and in many quarters, popular principles, in matters civil and ecclesiastical, in place of supplying their watch-words, as formerly, to the Protestant, are seen changing their fellowship, and becoming the boast and badge of the Catholic.

This memorable revolution, affecting not only the relative place, but the very mind of the great parties adverted to, is fraught with consequences of no small importance. Let Protestantism be placed in a position to be charged with doing evil, that good may come—let her favourite machinery be set up at the cost of an infringement on those great natural rights which are anterior even to the authority of religion itself—let it be seen that on the plea of doing kindly to her own, she can do cruelly to those who are not her own—let all her high pretension to superior light, and more expansive benevolence, have place in the eyes of men as a bigot

passion in favour of a class, rather than as a generous affection embracing humanity—let it be seen that the effect of the emoluments and authorities which she bestows upon her priesthood, in place of disposing them to act as the defenders of the weak against the strong, of the oppressed against the oppressor, is to render them the willing tools of the powers from which they have derived their worldly trappings, betrayers of the better cause in all disputes between proscription and right, privilege and justice, the bond and the free—let this, or anything resembling this, be the social position of Protestantism in the times before us, and be her theological creed never so true, her social morality being thus false, she will be despised, and powerless, and must perish ! We may be well assured that the society to come will not be of a sort to allow the mint and the cummin in matters of ecclesiastical observance to usurp the place of the weightier matters of the law in relation to the duties owing from man to man. Systems will be judged, as men are judged, by their fruits. The speculative and the institutional will be subordinated to the moral and the properly religious.

The papal system embraces most of the sublimer elements of Christian truth, though in forms always more or less imperfect or misapplied : and there is one of those elements which the recent history of the Roman-catholic church has served to bring into much greater prominence than formerly. We refer to the scriptural doctrine concerning the distinction between the civil and the ecclesiastical power ; and to the error of supposing that the latter can in no case be prosperous, except as taken under the patronage of the former.

If Christianity be a human invention, then let the magistrate take it, and do the best he may with it. But if it be from God, demonstrated as from him, and guarded in the earth by his pledged presence with it to that end, then it must be in better keeping already than can possibly be obtained for it by going from door to door among the fragile states and kingdoms of this world, begging the shelter of their short-lived power in its favour ! We discern some traces of this great truth even in the most guilty exercises of ecclesiastical ambition in past ages. The controversy between Becket and Henry II., and the more prolonged struggle between the pontiffs and the German emperors, had respect to some proper lines of distinction between the ecclesiastical and the civil power, the intention on the part of the clergy being to render the spiritual power independent of the secular. It is natural and just that the spiritual power should be thus independent. It was much more rational, also, that an ecclesiastic should be put forth as the head of the church, than that a layman should be raised to that dignity. But the great fault of the ecclesiastics of those times was, that they claimed exemption from the authority of the civil power, in a great degree, even in civil matters ; and, above all, that they were content to receive their pay as spiritual men from the treasury of Cæsar, while refusing to bow to the spiritual supremacy of Cæsar. All history has shewn that the church which accepts of such emolument must cease to be independent. Her freedom and her purity must alike suffer from an attempt thus to amalgamate the iron and the clay.

Even Catholics, and some of these highly distinguished

men, both among the priesthood and the laity, are beginning to perceive that the church has, upon the whole, more to fear than to hope from such alliances ; and that to put herself in bondage to the world, can never be a wise course, so long as her object should be to regenerate the world. "I am no believer," says De Tocqueville, himself a Catholic, "in the prosperity, any more than in the durability, of official philosophies ; and as to state religions, I have always held, that if they be sometimes of momentary service to the interests of political power, they always, sooner or later, become fatal to the church. Nor do I think with those who assert that to raise religion in the eyes of the people, and to make them do honour to her spiritual doctrines, it is desirable indirectly to give her ministers a political influence which the laws deny them. I am so much alive to the almost inevitable dangers which beset religious belief whenever the clergy take part in public affairs, and I am so convinced that Christianity must be maintained at any cost in the bosom of modern democracies, that I had rather shut up the priesthood within the sanctuary than allow them to step beyond it.

"What means, then, remain in the hands of constituted authorities to bring men back to spiritual opinions, or to hold them fast to the religion by which those opinions are suggested ?

"My answer will do me harm in the eyes of politicians. I believe that the sole effectual means which governments can employ, in order to have the doctrine of the immortality of the soul duly respected, is ever to act as if they believed in it themselves ; and I think that it is only by scrupulous conformity to religious morality

in great affairs, that they can hope to teach the community at large to know, to love, and to observe it in the lesser concerns of life.”*

It is not difficult to discern something of the process through which the mind of many intelligent Catholics may have passed to the holding and avowal of such opinions as are contained in the preceding extract. In the past there is much which might suggest a train of thought tending to such a result. But that the Roman-catholic church should have regained, during the present century, while almost excluded from state favour, so much of that power which she lost during the last century, when basking in such favour—this is a fact which seems to point toward the same conclusion with a singular degree of force. It has thus become manifest, that in the history of Catholicism, men may expect to find its times of spiritual strength in its times of secular weakness.

Nor has this lesson been supplied in vain. In respect to Catholicism, as in respect to nearly everything European, the generation of fifty years since, whose habits had received their entire mould from the conventional ideas and manners of the last century, has passed away, and the young men of the generation which has come into its room, have grown up in new circumstances, and under the influence of new impressions. This is eminently the case with the Roman-catholic priesthood. The church to which these men are devoted has been known to them only in her poverty, and as having been, for the most part, peeled and proscribed by the powers of the earth. But the object of their affection, though

* Democracy in America, iii., pp. 301, 302.

cast down, is not destroyed. In her adversity they feel an attachment to their church which they would not have felt had their lot been cast in the times of her prosperity. Her very dust is precious in their sight, and they take their place willingly as amidst her ruins, in the hope of reconstructing the fallen edifice, and of causing it to rest in future on foundations properly its own, and not on the secular and adventitious, as belonging to the kingdoms of this world.

It is a thought of no mean power—of power to affect the intellect of the strong in common with the imagination of the weak—that the church, inasmuch as her objects have in them a permanence and a grandeur, in comparison with which the glory of all secular kingdoms is as the morning dew, so her resting-place should be, not on the accidents of royal favour, on the intrigues of cabinets, or on any of the perishable means natural to kingdoms which flourish only to decay, but upon foundations of a moral nature, partaking of a moral certainty and greatness harmonizing with her own transcendent origin and mission. The church of Christ *is* all this; it is the error of the Catholic not to see the church of Christ anywhere except in the church of Rome; but let the mind of the Catholic priesthood through Europe become impregnated with thoughts and principles of this nature in relation to their church, and, alas! then, for that section of the Protestant church which has dwindled into a heartless rationalism, whether in Geneva or Berlin; and, alas! no less for all Protestantism, which, looking to the fatness of its glebe, or to the supposed strength of its state enactments, is not prepared to bring to the defence and diffusion of the

truth the disciplined intellect and the sanctified heart—the mind and affection capable of labouring for truth, of suffering for truth, and, if need be, of surrendering life itself as a willing oblation in the cause of truth !

We mean not to intimate by the preceding observations that we regard the present race of Catholic priests as an extraordinary class of men. The great majority of them are, no doubt, very common-place persons—men competent to the ordinary routine of their office, and nothing more. But this dull labouring multitude are not left without an intelligent and commanding leadership. The names of Lingard and Wiseman are enough to point attention to that fact. What is wanting among Protestants in order to their meeting Roman-catholic controversialists successfully, is not, speaking generally, greater learning or greater power, but simply a disposition to make the matters in debate between the two churches a subject of adequate study, and some impression that the time has come in which this controversy must be renewed and prosecuted thoroughly and widely. But the study of this subject, which, in the education of the Catholic priesthood, is the one thing to which every man attends ; in the education of the Protestant priesthood, is the one thing which almost every man neglects. It may be that Catholicism must be permitted to make much further progress, and to vaunt itself even more than at present, before this wiser condition of mind among Protestants will be induced. Nothing, we believe, is wanting, beside an equal motive to exertion, to demonstrate that the better cause is the most powerful—and the state of things about us seems to promise that the day is not distant when that motive will be supplied.

On the whole, it will be perceived, that we do not reckon on any speedy disappearance, or on any rapid decline of Catholicism. Our confidence is, that to prevail in modern society it must be a very different system, both in aspect and pretension, from that which has prevailed in past ages. It is, indeed, this already, in most Catholic countries, and even in Rome itself. The population of that city is a little less than 160,000, and it includes nearly 400 elementary schools, in which nearly 500 teachers are employed in delivering primary instruction to more than 14,000 children. It is not a little instructive to see the city of the Vatican rivalling in this manner, and even excelling, such cities as Edinburgh and Berlin, in its zeal for popular education ! We doubt not, that the ecclesiastics of Rome, and the functionaries at Berlin, are men of one object—men concerned to train the mind in one groove, and by giving to it the appearance of thinking, to preclude the reality. But this is the great experiment in the history of Europe, and in the history of human society, which is now in its incipient stages among us—viz., an attempt to perpetuate great arbitrary power in the magistrate and the priest, along with great general intelligence among the people as subjects and worshippers. We see everything to hope in the probable issue of this experiment ; but in the meantime it will be important to bear in mind, that it is in these novel circumstances that men will be obliged to conduct their discussions in the cause of civil liberty, and of a purer Christianity, in the time to come.

It is well to have made popular education appear to be imperative. It is not unreasonable to hope, that the

next demonstration may be to shew that civil liberty, and religious liberty, are no less imperative. The great elements of social improvement always work slowly, and it is the manner of old institutions and old states to receive them by little and little, and often, while adopting the good, bit by bit, as in stealth, to continue their repudiation of the source from which it has been borrowed. In these matters, the vocation of the solitary man, and even of the solitary generation, is to labour and wait, and often to bequeath their measures incomplete to the men who come after them. But notwithstanding this test of patience and humility, there is progress, and it may be that the progress is only the more safe from not being more speedy. We hail all the signs of improvement in the form and spirit of Catholicism, partly on their own account, and partly because we believe that it is by the progress of such internal improvement, mainly, that what is most peculiar to that system, and in the greatest degree its fault, will be ultimately obliterated from religious history. Hitherto, all its greatness has been the greatness of a caste—not of a people.

SECTION IV.

ON THE MISSION OF CHRISTIANITY IN RELATION TO MODERN SOCIETY.

THE Hebrew nation were the descendants of “a Syrian ready to perish.” As the children of Abraham, they came from the loins of one “as good as dead,” but they are described as the sand of the sea for multitude. Offspring of the slave population once toiling at the

brick-kilns of Egypt, they rose to the summit of the civilization of their times. From ages concerning which no literary memorial beside has come down to us, these people have transmitted a variety of compositions, which, in beauty and force, may be compared with the literature of any people in any age. They signalized themselves in art, in science, in policy, in conquest, in commerce. Nations which despised them in their youth, were eclipsed by them, one after another, as they rose to manhood.

But the great distinction of this people was in their views with regard to the Divine Being, the origin and government of the universe, the elements of acceptable worship, and the nature of a real piety in the heart of man. On all these points, the intelligence of man has even now to turn—if it would arrive at certainty, from every oracle of human wisdom, and to take its place at the feet of the great Hebrew prophet, and of his successors in that office. The world has grown much older since the age of Moses, but it has received no increase of light on such questions, except as derived from the same source of inspiration. We see no adequate explanation of the fact, that these people passed from their known condition in Egypt to their known condition in Syria, except that which is supplied in their own records. Nor can any other explanation be given of the fact, that the seed of the slave multitude under the Pharaohs, should have been distinguished—as they assuredly were—above all the nations which have place in the earlier history of the world, by the intelligence and loftiness of their views in relation to the works and the being of the Infinite. Their early literature is ours, because the theology of which it was the chosen medium

is a theology from heaven. Their intellect rose above the ordinary soarings of the human mind, and their spiritual feeling sympathized with higher forms of goodness, because they were taken under a peculiar teaching in order to that end. Everything in their history is thus made to bespeak them a chosen people. From the barbarism of their origin we derive irrefragable evidence for the divinity of their faith. Nothing short of miracle could have made them a powerful people in any form, and nothing but a revelation from heaven could have made them the people they were. Their ignorance could have devised nothing so intelligent as the records we have received from them; their vices would not have permitted their devising anything so spiritually elevated, or in any degree so moral.

It was the influence of this revelation, designed mainly to raise their thoughts to heaven, which conferred upon them, as by the way, their distinction and power upon earth. Often were they reminded that their prosperity, their very existence as a nation, depended on the consistency of their character as the professed worshippers of the only true God. "Behold," says Moses, "I have taught you statutes and judgments, even as the Lord my God commanded me, that ye should do so in the land whither ye go to possess it. Keep therefore and do them; for this is your wisdom and your understanding in the sight of the nations, which shall hear all these statutes, and say—Surely this great nation is a wise and understanding people. For what nation is there so great, who hath God so nigh unto them, as the Lord our God is in all things that we call upon him for? Only take heed to thyself, for the Lord thy God is a consuming fire, even a jealous God. When ye shall

corrupt yourselves, and do evil in the sight of the Lord, to provoke him to anger: I call heaven and earth to witness against you this day, that ye shall soon utterly perish from off the land whereunto ye go over Jordan to possess it; ye shall not prolong your days upon it, but shall utterly be destroyed.”* Thus their high place among the nations was to be holden for God. Their piety was their only safeguard. Should that fail, their walls and gates would prove feeble barriers to the foe, and the courage which might have rendered their borders terrible, would not suffice to give them safety in their dwelling-places. Their privileges were the measure of their responsibility. More had been done in their behalf, than in behalf of the cities of Moab or Ammon, and more was exacted from them. Their sins would be deemed greater than those of other nations, because their light had been made greater, and they would in consequence be followed by judgments more speedy and appalling. These solemn announcements set forth a great principle of the divine government—a principle regulating the divine dispensations toward the nations of the world in these later ages, no less than in ancient time.

We may now ask, are there no points of resemblance between the history of Britain and the history of ancient Palestine? Is there nothing in the story of our land which chance might not have supplied, or which ordinary discernment might not have foreseen as probable? Inquire of the ancients, and they will tell thee. Demand from the sages of Greece or Rome, if, amidst their wildest dreams, the vision ever crossed them which

* Deut. iv. 5, *et seq.*

seemed to say, that the remote and savage island of Britain should some day become the sovereign of the ocean, and the centre of a larger empire than ever owned the authority of Thebes or Babylon, Persepolis or Rome? In the fulness of their wisdom they point to Southern Asia, and are heard to say—"In that open and fertile territory, stretching from the Mediterranean to the Indus, and from the Tauric mountains to the Indian Sea, you behold a space which nature has clearly designed to be the seat of the great empires which have there made their appearance in succession from remote ages. Near to it is Egypt, no less capable of becoming the home of a powerful and highly civilized people. The whole coast of Northern Africa may be made to present its cities and states of no mean consideration. Greece, Italy, and Spain, all possess, in their location as centres of the civilized world, and in their peninsular form, facilities for greatness which may be improved by any one, or by all of them, to almost any extent. But beyond those limits barbarism holds its undisturbed dominion. Whatever the world is to witness of civilization or empire, must take its rise, in great part, if not entirely, from the shores of the Mediterranean sea. To expect anything of that nature from the regions northward of the Pyrenees, the Alps, or the Tauric mountains, would be to expect against all experience. Over the territory shut in by that belt of mountains on the south, and by its frozen regions on the north, and reaching from the farthest west to the farthest east, rudeness has been perpetuated from time immemorial, and no imagination can be so extravagant as to expect that it will ever be otherwise."

Just thus, as we think, would the wisest have talked on

this subject in ancient time. "But where now is the wise, where is the scribe, where is the disputer of this world?"

It is now to be observed, that over the whole of that circle of territory, on which alone, according to the ancient theory, the appearances of empire or civilization were possible, nothing more than the decayed vestiges of past greatness, and nothing deserving the name of empire, has existed for ages; while the portion of Europe northwards of the Alps and Pyrenees, and Britain especially—that outpost of all rudeness—these have not only so risen as to be capable of giving law to the south, but have called into existence forms of social policy and improvement, and withal, an extent and strength of dominion, greatly transcending anything realized by the states of the ancient world. Thus they that were last have become first. The sceptre of the world has passed into the hands of those who were not a people, and of whom it was foretold that they never could be a people; while the men of might, who once wielded that sceptre so proudly have not only ceased, but their long favoured territory, encircling the waters of the Mediterranean, has been, during many seasons, like some exhausted soil, incapable of bearing any of its former fruit unto perfection, and overrun with every noxious thing.

The causes which have contributed to this progress of our country are many and varied—the hill and valley which diversify its surface; the fertile nature of the soil, such as to reward labour, without affording licence to indolence; the vast mineral treasures which have been lodged, from ancient time, beneath so much fruitfulness and beauty; the high physical energy of the British people, as the effect of a wisely adjusted combination of soil and climate; the flow of waters which has separated

our territory so completely from the mainland of the continent, giving our homes safety from invasion, not so much by a military force, often so fatal to liberty, as by our fleets, which cannot so well interfere with it; the vigour, in consequence, of those popular principles and feelings which may be traced in the root and impress of all our institutions; the wholesome action of our popular freedom upon commerce, and of our commerce upon popular freedom; the influence of the solemn sanctions and high hopes of Christianity on moral and spiritual habit in the mind of our people; the manner in which wealth so accumulated has conduced to power, and in which power so obtained has conduced to refinement and empire—all these, and more, are matters to be well considered, distinctly and together, if we would see clearly how it has come to pass that the descendants of men who had once their place as on the outskirts of savage life, have become a people whose conquests, blood, language, and civilization, are seen spreading themselves over nearly half the globe. If there be a providence on earth, must we not account the history of such a people as holding no mean place in the development of its purposes? This providence has been all to us that a dispensation of miracle was to the Hebrew nation. With this sameness of bestowment has come a sameness of responsibility, and will come a sameness of destiny, should we be found unfaithful to our trust. By the favour of the All-benevolent we have been raised, in some respects, high above all people; and should we fall by the divine judgments, we may well fear that it will be our lot to sink below the basest of the kingdoms—for such is the manner of the divine retribution.

We should not need to be reminded that there is a voice from earth, as well as from heaven, which is heard to proclaim that "all flesh is grass," and that the glory of man, even when set forth in the most splendid exhibitions of national greatness, is as "the flower of grass." The same lot attends the solitary man, and associated man. Nations rise like billows, and so descend. This law of change pervades everything human. All things have their flowing and their ebbing. The flower blooms only to fade. Manhood attains to its vigour, only to be borne down, as to its second childhood, by age and its infirmities. Everything is either rising or falling, and rising only to fall. It is easy to mark progression or decay—but maturity? Alas! that is of short continuance. We scarcely recognise it, when it begins to vanish, and is gone. It is so with nations, it is so with everything concerning the history of nations.

We cannot be too strongly impressed with the fact that we are exposed at this moment to the full force of those moral dangers before which the most powerful nations of the earth have all, in their turn, utterly fallen. On that dizzy height which they knew not how to keep we now stand. The cup which intoxicated them, and to their ruin, is in our hand. The ruins of Babylon and Tyre, of Thebes and Carthage, of Athens and Rome, are all as at our feet, and into that condition they have fallen from the sort and degree of elevation to which we have now attained. The vices natural to a high state of civilization brought upon those states decay and desolation—is there no room to fear that the same cause may produce the same effect among ourselves? All those evils which subject communities to disease and death,

are with us, even as with them, and if they are to be counteracted among us as they were not counteracted among them, must it not be by the use of some special means which they did not possess ; and who can need be told that the only special means we possess at all adequate to such a purpose, are those presented in the evidence and nature of revealed religion ? If the power proper to the true religion, as distinguished from the weakness natural to the false, does not avail us in this respect, then have we no hope. The law of decay, so observable in the history of bygone states and empires, must be further exemplified in us ; and the great cities of our land soon be such as the great cities of other regions have become—the monuments, not of a greatness which is, but of a greatness which has been.

But we are not by any means shut up to the necessity of looking to such a result. We possess in Christianity the true religion, which the nations of antiquity did not possess ; and in our Protestantism, the purer, healthier form of Christianity, which has not been the lot of many nations bearing the Christian name. In the gospel, as professed by us, there are means of preservation, which, under the Divine blessing, may operate so wholesomely on our social condition, as to save us, in a good degree, from the dangers of wealth and power, by disposing us to use them in a manner acceptable to the Being who has bestowed them. An enlightened Christianity often does this in the case of individuals, and it has power so to do in the case of a nation. In this respect, it is as true of states as of persons, if destroyed, they must destroy themselves. The great want is, not the want of means which might conduce to perpetuity, but of the

dispositions necessary to make a right use of such means. The great mission of the gospel is to prepare human spirits, of every nation, kindred, and tongue, for the presence and service of their Maker in another state ; but its adaptation to strengthen and elevate the communities of this world as such, is also a part of its mission, and modern society will be safe only as revealed truth is suffered to perform this part of its office widely and fully.

From the fact that Christianity is a Divine revelation, it must be reasonable to conclude that its influence will be favourable to the condition of human nature in the present state, as truly as in the state to come, and to the welfare of communities, no less than to that of individuals. Revelation, if supposed at all, must always be regarded in the light of assistance to the weak, and as a boon to the necessitous ; and only let it be conceded that the revelation which God is supposed to have made is an expression of the Divine benevolence, and we conclude at once, and of necessity, that it will shed a most benign influence upon everything pertaining to human welfare. If it is to be regarded as an emanation from the Divine goodness, and as goodness designed for man, we may infer with certainty that it is designed to embrace the well-being of humanity in the broadest view that may be taken of that well-being. It may, with confidence, be expected to show, that it has a mission for the body as well as for the soul, for man in society, no less than for man considered alone.

But while this conclusion would follow naturally from the simplest view that can be taken of the origin and design of the gospel, it follows with much greater force when we call to mind that the great moral and spiritual

renovation which the gospel proposes to accomplish in men has its commencement—and not only its commencement, but its place of progress—upon this earth ; so that it is in this present world that men are to grow up, under its teaching and nourishment, to a state of meetness for the inheritance awaiting them hereafter. Now it must be manifest, that it is not possible to confer large moral benefit on men, without conferring upon them large temporal advantage ; and as little possible is it to confer good on men, in any large measure, as individuals, without conferring good on society as necessarily embracing such individuals.

Revelation, then, is an expression of the Divine goodness toward man, and as such, must be regarded as descending with benignity upon human nature in all the connexions in which it may be viewed. Let the fact of a Divine revelation be admitted, and it becomes the manifest duty of nations to look to it as their great means of safety and happiness ; and the more such revelation may be designed to do for men spiritually, the more we may be assured it is designed to do for them physically and socially.

We may now add, that the favourable influence of Christianity on the nation embracing it, must follow, necessarily, from its many explicit injunctions in regard to—industry.

Locality, climate, soil, all may have much to do in producing the difference observable among nations. But no cause is, upon the whole, so potent in this respect, as that which comes under the name of industry. It is industry—all that we intend by the terms, application, self-culture, energy—which, more than any other cause,

gives some men their superiority to others, and, upon the same principle, some nations their superiority to other nations. There may be other causes more remote, which contribute to build up or break down habits of industry ; but where those habits are once formed, it is in proportion to their steadiness, and to the legitimacy of the object toward which they are directed, that communities become great. Hence the fact, that we can never judge of the power of a commercial people from the extent of their territory. Venice—the Ocean-Rome—was never greater than when she could not boast of a single foot of land, save that which she had formed for herself as from the depths of the sea. The same may be said of ancient Tyre. It is this habit which renders men capable of overcoming difficulties, and of seizing upon all possible advantages so as to turn them to the best account. By this means, the aspect of a Paradise has been given to the wilderness ; the desolate places of the earth have been made the abode of multitudes of people ; the most barren rock has become the home of wealth, power, and refinement ; and states, inconsiderable in other respects, have proved the most formidable. In short—industry is a power which can multiply both men and resources, so as to baffle all the ordinary modes of calculation, even among the wisest.

Now this habit, so effective in its influence on the communities of the earth, is exacted in the gospel from all who would be numbered among its disciples. It does not enjoin the rich so to care for the poor, as to supersede the necessity of that industry which should ever be allied with a state of need ; nor does it so press the hopes of a future and better state of being upon the be-

liever, as to disqualify him for worldly enterprise and exertion. All our duties in relation to each other are inculcated so as to harmonize with a pervading spirit of activity; and all the felicities we hope to realize in the future are made to blend with the obligations under which we are placed in regard to the present. Its command is, that, "If any man will not work, neither should he eat;" and it teaches, explicitly, that those who substitute the habits of the idler and the busybody, "working not at all," for those of industry, are persons who should be put away from the Christian fellowship as walking disorderly.* Its clear expectation is, that those who profess to be Christians should know how to unite "diligence in business" with "fervour in spirit, serving the Lord." Thus industry, in place of being merely a social virtue, inculcated on the principles of human wisdom or inexpediency, is made to be indispensable, in the great majority of mankind, to religious consistency, and is enforced, accordingly, by the highest possible sanctions.

In consonance with these views, it is found, that in these later ages the commercial ingenuity and enterprise of the world have their place, for the most part, among Christian nations; and, since the Reformation, among those states of Christendom professing the faith of the gospel in its purer form. In the history of Germany, of France, of Holland, of Britain, and of the United States, we have ample illustration of the connexion which subsists between a pure Christianity and habits of industry—and, in consequence, between a pure

* 2 Thess. chap. iii.

Christianity and the wealth, power, culture, and happiness of nations. In all these instances there has probably been a large amount of action and reaction between religion and social character:—but the adaptation of Christianity to the higher forms of national greatness and its tendencies to raise nations to such greatness, are not the less certain or manifest on that account.

It is scarcely necessary to add that the industry of religious men—separated as that class of persons commonly are from the fashionable and frivolous amusements which absorb so much of the time and spirits of such as do not participate in their graver feeling—is in part a natural result of the habits peculiar to them. Shut out by their principles and preferences from the avenues to forbidden pleasure or unjust gain, they pursue their lawful objects with more steadiness, in consequence of pursuing them with an undivided mind.

The lessons which the New Testament inculcates with regard to social justice and humanity, constitute another of the direct forms in which the gospel conduces to the welfare and stability of nations.

The gospel is the work of Divine wisdom, and the wisdom pervading it is hardly more conspicuous in what it teaches, than in what it forbears to teach. It contains the principles of all truth, and of all duty; but the development of these principles, and the manner in which they may be moulded and applied, are left in a great degree to time and circumstances. No progress, accordingly, will ever be made in the intellectual or moral history of our race, which will not be found to have been anticipated in the structure of that word which is destined to endure for ever. The Mind from which we have

received it, foreseeeth the end from the beginning, and its instructions, which we have seen to have been so well adjusted to all the apparent contingencies of the past, will prove to have been adapted with equal precision to every form of novelty which may have place in the history of the future. It possessed a manifest suitability to its office in the world's youth, and we may be sure that it has been constructed so as to be no less adapted to its office in the world's age. Its matter is the teaching of wisdom, and so is its method. It has been teaching men from the beginning, but always in manner and measure as they were able to bear it.

One memorable illustration of this method of instruction we may perceive, in the form which is given to the doctrine of scripture on the subject of civil government. We have nothing inculcated in the New Testament, either directly or indirectly, in regard to the comparative merits of the several forms of government, but much in relation to the enlightened and humane spirit in which every form should be administered. We are not told that monarchy is preferable to aristocracy, or that aristocracy is preferable to democracy, or that all may not, in a diversity of circumstances, be alike good.

But this caution, this restraint upon utterance, so wisely observed in regard to the varied shape which civil institutions have assumed, gives place to the utmost clearness and force of expression whenever the moral purpose of such institutions is touched upon. In this view, the impress they are ever made to bear is, that they should be "a terror to evil doers, and a praise to those who do well." To resist them while they sustain that character, is to resist "the ordinance of God."

While characterized by a spirit of this nature, they are not so much a device of man as an institute of heaven ; and to obey them is not an act of civil obedience merely, but, in some sense, an act of religion.

It should be observed, however, that the sacred writers hold no flattering language toward the possessors of power, any more than toward those who are subject to it. Servile spirits, indeed, have sometimes attempted to found the doctrine of passive obedience on the language of the New Testament, but this has been by expounding that language in parts, and not as a whole—the vulgar process, by which men have endeavoured to derive a sanction from the pages of truth for every form of error. The responsibilities of magistracy are nowhere more strongly inculcated than in Holy Scripture. In no other book do we find stronger marks of reprobation attached to the character of the selfish ruler, or of the unjust judge. Obedience is enjoined on the one hand, but protection is exacted no less distinctly and strongly on the other ; and, in this manner, everything impressive in religion is made to be subservient to social order and social prosperity.

It is not necessary to advert again, in this place, to the connexion which subsists between industry and accumulation ; and between the fact of possessing property, and the desire of possessing it securely, and of possessing so much personal liberty as may be necessary to the enjoyment of property. Nor need we observe again, that the causes which teach men to appreciate such immunities, are such as must enable them to discover the best method of realizing them, and such as must give them power to pursue those methods, so as to realize the object of their wishes. All these consequences,

embracing so much pertaining to the dominion of order, law, and freedom, follow, in the most natural course, from those habits of industry which Christianity enjoins, by its peculiar sanctions, as indispensable to its proper service.

But it is not enough that a spirit of equal justice is made, by means thus direct and indirect, to pervade the domain of law, and of the administration of law. The spirit generated by Christianity, which demands this, demands much more. Its influence will be perceivable in the halls of legislation, and in the courts sacred to legal proceedings ; but it has a thousand channels beside through which to convey its impression to the mass of society. It is to this spirit mainly that we must attribute the progress which has been made in regard to the extinction of the slave-trade and slavery ; in the abatement of the severity which has so long disgraced our criminal code ; in the improvement of prison discipline ; and in many other ameliorations of the lot of humanity, immediately connected with law and government.

Concerning the greatness of the power which is thus called into existence, we may judge in part from the host of voluntary institutions for the benefit of humanity which owe their origin purely to this source—but still more from the effect of such impulses on all the private relations of life. Christianity begins with inculcating its great lessons of equity and kindness on every man in the relationships of his own fireside ; and it ascends from the society exhibited in the family circle, to society at large. It aims to make a man virtuous at home, as the best security for his being virtuous abroad. It would teach men how best to fulfil the magistracy and priest-

hood of their own households, and would thus qualify them to uphold the civil and religious in the wider community around them. It begins thus, at the foundation of society, and ascends, by wholesome gradations, toward the point in which it terminates.

Nor should it ever be forgotten, that in the history of society, nearly everything good may be traced from the base of the pyramid upwards, rather than from its apex downwards : and in states which have been animated in any good degree by Christianity, this has always been eminently the case. The few can do nothing truly great without the sympathy of the many ; but the many, if once enlightened, are not so much dependent on the few. Refinement, elegance, grace—these must be sought in the higher places of the social system ; but the multitudes, who have their position nearer to its base, are capable of appreciating those broad moral sentiments, on the prevalence and power of which all states mainly depend for their strength and greatness. It is here, as in everything else,—the more needful bounties of Providence are common to us all, and they are the least valuable which are limited to a few. Our nature is from God, the artificial comes in great part from ourselves.

It is not enough, therefore, to bestow upon a nation virtuous rulers. If the institutions and policy of a people are to be characterized by justice and humanity, you must cause a sympathy with the majesty and beauty of such things as justice and humanity to become a part of the national character. When Solon heard censure passed on some of his laws, he replied—"They are not the best that might have been framed, but they are the best the Athenians are capable of bearing." Now this is

the common case. The defects of the governed, give their impress to the measures of the governing. We shall see no faultless legislation, until we see a much nearer approach toward a faultless community. Laws and institutions are the fruit of society; and we must make the tree good, if we would have the fruit good.

It is, accordingly, toward this object, that Christianity—with a wisdom which bespeaks its divine origin—especially directs its light and power. It aims to make the fountain pure, assured that the stream will then be pure also. It aims to make us good men, assured that we shall then be good citizens. It seeks to imbue the mind with a sincere love of great principles in relation to the just and the humane, assured that the policy of states will not fail to be pervaded by those principles in proportion as they affect the spirit and relations of private life. It leaves the form of social institutions, as we have seen, to circumstances, and human wisdom; but it exhibits the spirit which should animate them, as unalterable and eternal; and to create, nourish, and mature that spirit, is proclaimed as an important and essential feature of its Divine mission.

We may now advert to the nature and certainty of the discoveries made by Christianity in regard to future retribution, considered in their adaptation to strengthen all those elements of social life which contribute most eminently to the preservation and well-being of nations.

The vices which Christianity condemns, are those which have waged a ceaseless warfare against the perpetuity of nations, and which have been the main cause of destruction in all that have been destroyed. On the other hand, the virtues which it commends, have been the

health and power of all those states which have become known to us as healthy and powerful. Other religious systems may have condemned these vices and commended these virtues, but they have none of them exhibited the evil or the good with the same clearness ; they have none of them unveiled a state of retribution with the same distinctness and power ; and, above all, they have none of them spoken with the same authority—the same attestation of truth. The wonder is not that the false systems of religion should have proved in so great a degree unequal in this respect to the service expected from them—it is wonderful rather that so much salutary impression should have been produced by them. Their moral code has been, in a great measure, defective and false ; their representations of a future state disfigured with absurdity in every form ; and the want of every sort of evidence that might have shewn them to be true, has been so obvious, and the existence of every sort of evidence shewing them to be the contrary of the true, has been so palpable, that their influence to the extent in which it has prevailed, can only be explained by referring it to two great facts—the weakness of human reason, and the strength of the religious instinct in man as allied with that reason.

In the gospel we have nothing of this kind to deplore. In its pages, vice and virtue are depicted with a completeness and force discovered nowhere else. Its sanctions commend themselves to the conscience with a double power—a power derived in part from their manifest propriety, and in part from the peculiar evidence of certainty attending them. It is true the gospel has been impugned and rejected. It is true, also, that this

has been done by men of science and learning, and, in some instances, even by the multitude. But it is no less true, that the most enlightened nations of the earth, and minds which have been deemed the great ornament of those nations, have concurred to do it a ready homage. It is not in the nature of moral evidence that it should be irresistible. Men are now in a state of probation, and it does not comport with such a state that the pathway to truth or duty should be one of necessity. If it be in the hearts of men to choose the darkness rather than the light, it is the will of God that they should find themselves in possession of the awful liberty to make such a choice. Our state of trial is inseparable from this kind of freedom. The evidences of divine revelation are such as to have satisfied every grade of intellect and culture; if there be a man, accordingly, whom those evidences have not sufficed to convince, we deem it just to refer this failure, not to fault in the evidence, but to fault belonging to the mind to which it has been commended. We regard it as prepared to do upon that intellect, as it has done before upon intellects of the same order, were it not prevented by some form of moral resistance in the latter case, which was not allowed to prevail in the former. Such resistance, wherever it exists, is the work of the responsible agent, and it is no part of the divine economy to prevent its existence, any more than to prevent the existence of evil in any form.

It is thus plain, that the gospel carries with it all the attestation to its truth which it is reasonable to expect should accompany a divine revelation; and it must now be observed, that this peculiar and impressive amount of evidence, is so much force placed directly against the

whole of those vices which serve to weaken and destroy kingdoms, and on the side of all those virtues which tend to strengthen and ennoble them. It is the good and evil of the future, made to bear for the purposes of virtue and benevolence upon the present. It is a system of rewards and punishments belonging to eternity, and declared to be eternal, made to operate as a check upon the vices, and as a stimulus to the virtues, which belong to time. It is all that the code and the penalties of the magistrate should be, and much, very much more than they ever can be. It extends to all vice and all virtue. To every moral movement of the spirit, as well as to the outward conduct. The detection of the guilty is certain. Judgment at last is inevitable. Both from what it is in itself, and from its external evidence, it is adapted to secure a general credence among men; and the place which it thus obtains in the convictions of any people, is the measure in which we may expect them to be observant of the course favourable to their separate and collective welfare.

We may perceive a further illustration of the connexion which subsists between the Christianity of a people and their social welfare, in the tendency of the great facts or doctrines of the gospel to subdue the selfish passions, and to impart vigour to all the benevolent affections.

We say nothing just now in respect to the Divine power which may be regarded as attendant on the gospel, but we look simply to the doctrines of the New Testament, as exhibited in its pages, and to the natural influence of those doctrines on the mind and habits of a people sincerely embracing them as parts of a Divine revelation.

It must be admitted, that consistency is not to be very largely expected from mankind. It may be easy to delineate the character which men should sustain according to certain admitted principles; while, on turning from our theories of consistency to facts, we find that we have to lament a strange want of accordance between their creed and their practice. But wherever an elevated standard of goodness is recognised, much is gained. Men may fall greatly below that standard, but they are in a measure aware that they do so, and they are not altogether insensible to the reproaches incurred by such inconsistency. In the case of persons whose religious preferences or professions are at all marked, this consequence follows conspicuously; and even with the great mass of merely nominal Christians, such a standard of appeal has its uses and effect. It is a part of the mission of truth, to diminish the errors which it cannot wholly eradicate—and of the mission of goodness, to abate the evils which it cannot wholly remove. Nor are we to expect that changes of this nature will be accomplished otherwise than slowly and partially.

Whatever is done, accordingly, toward placing the just and benign spirit of Christianity before a people, is so much done toward fixing a reproach on all the displays of selfish passion, and toward connecting a sense of appropriateness and dignity with a due regard to the things that are equal and benevolent. Men who sin against this authority have to lay their account with being reproached as having so done—if from no other quarter, certainly from the persons who have been wronged by such delinquency. Men who are not

Christians, can thus avail themselves of the spirit of Christianity, as the best means of fixing a stigma on the evils which they fear, or under which they may be suffering. In this manner, the Christianity which does not make men Christians, does much to render them more cautious, more just, more humane.

We have spoken before of the distinctness with which the moral lessons of the gospel are inculcated, and of the purity and completeness by which they are characterized. But it should be observed, that there is nothing of purity, of generosity, or of compassion, enjoined in the precepts of the gospel, which is not embodied in forms much more affecting in its doctrines. None of these are mere abstractions—they are all facts of great practical import. We call them doctrines, but they are all fraught with precept, and precept enforced by the living energy of a Divine example. What literal precept on the grace of condescension, could speak with a force like the fact of the manifestation and the life of the Incarnate One, as set forth in the gospel? What expression could be given to the nobleness and beauty of generous affection, like that which is conveyed by the agony of the Garden and the death of the Cross? What teaching concerning forbearance or long-suffering, patience or pity, which may be set forth in any sort of precept could equal the display of those forms of benevolent affection as embodied in the office of the Holy Spirit? What language could announce the necessity of upholding truth and justice in their harmony with mercy, like that which is uttered by the immaculateness of the Redeemer's nature, allied as it is with the wrong, and torture, and sorrow, of his passion? What em-

blazonment of the magnanimity of overcoming evil with good, might be compared with the manifestation of that grace in the redemption which has been thus accomplished for mankind—a redemption by which men are rescued from infinite evil, raised to the possession of infinite good, and this by means which call forth, in a compass surpassing all created thought, the resources of the Divine power and compassion! It is to be observed, also, that it is the view of the Divine nature brought before us in these facts which is, above all, commended—not only to our admiration, but especially as our pattern, in Holy Scripture:—"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus; who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: but made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men; and being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the Cross."* Thus the doctrines of the gospel become its precepts in another form. Its whole structure partakes of harmony and unity; its one utterance being—"Glory to God in the highest, on the earth peace, and goodwill toward men!" To become its disciples is to imbibe its spirit; and to do homage to its authority, in any measure, is to bow to the law of goodness. It is by the Cross—its nameless tenderness and power—that savages have been humanized, and the most sordid ennobled, when all other means have failed. It is that revelation of the goodness of God which has been appointed by infinite wisdom and be-

* Phil. ii. 5—8.

nevolence as the great means of leading sinners to repentance. It is this which must be sent to the heart of our Great Cities if they are to flourish and endure. It is this, pre-eminently, which has made the gospel the power of God unto salvation.

We shall err, however,—fatally err,—if we suppose that the truths of the gospel, eminently adapted as they may be to arrest attention and impress the heart, will ever accomplish the end designed to be accomplished by them, if unaccompanied by a Divine power. Its truth is strong in its influence on the relationships of this world, in proportion as it is powerful in its influence on the relationships which have respect to the world to come. It will become potent in conferring temporal good on society at large, only as it is potent in conferring spiritual good on those who profess to receive it as Christians, and to ends strictly religious. It will bless the world,—but only according to the measure in which it first blesses the church. Its power as the conservator of states, will everywhere be determined by its power as a source of light and sanctity to its sincere disciples. But this nucleus strength, on which the strength of all its subordinate influences almost entirely depends, is from above, and is that concerning which our blessed Lord spake, when he said—“Ask, that ye may receive; seek, that ye may find.”

If Christianity does not thus demonstrate its Divinity by performing its proper spiritual office on the minds of redeemed men, and does not diffuse—as its subordinate result in such case—its benignant influence over everything human, we know not how to look to the society which is to be, without apprehensions amounting to

terror. Of all the existing systems of religion, this is the only one which can possibly be perpetuated as the religion of intelligent men. Were this to fail, no new scheme which philosophy might devise, could be, on the whole, more competent to come into its place, than the old which are decaying and perishing everywhere around us. In such case, society, loosened from all anchorage in relation to the future, would of necessity be drifted and tossed by a world of uncertainties and passions, in a manner frightful to contemplate. We know of nothing connected with the possible condition of humanity, from which the wise and good may more reasonably shrink away, than from the contemplation of modern society, with all its strong democratic tendencies, without religion! But without religion, during some dreadful interval of time, it assuredly will be, if Christianity be not its religion.

We are thankful, however, in being able to cherish the persuasion that society is not approaching the verge of such a gulph. Christianity, at present the only religion of enlightened men, is destined to become the religion of an enlightened world. Happy the man who has learnt to rest his own hope upon it, and whose most coveted pleasures are derived from the prospect of its ever augmenting influence upon the condition of humanity on earth and in heaven.

APPENDIX.

THE representations made by Lord Ashley, in the House of Commons, in regard to the ignorance and irreligion said to abound in our manufacturing districts, were immediately followed by the introduction of Sir James Graham's Factory Bill, with its clauses relating to popular education. The former was meant to set forth the reasonableness and urgency of the latter. In the language of his lordship, such is the destitution of the districts adverted to, that they may be described as "*a great and terrible wilderness*;" and if left as they are, they must be expected, in the course of a few years, to send forth, "in addition to our present arrears, *a fearful multitude of untutored savages*." That the correctness of this description might be duly tested, and the ground for this serious foreboding be well examined, Mr. Edward Baines, jun., the editor of the Leeds Mercury, has instituted a series of inquiries in relation to church and chapel room, and to the state of popular education, through a multitude of parishes and townships in the manufacturing districts of Yorkshire, Lancashire, Cheshire, and including one parish in Derbyshire,—the population of these places amounting collectively to 2,208,771. The returns obtained by these inquiries, and obtained in a manner warranting the strongest confidence in their general accuracy, is as follows:—

1st. That in these manufacturing districts there is *church*

and chapel room for 45 per cent. of the entire population ; and deducting the Catholics, who fill their chapels several times in the day, the church and chapel room for Protestants cannot fall greatly short of 50 per cent.

2nd. That this provision for the religious instruction of the community has been made, and is still supported, almost wholly by the *voluntary zeal and liberality of the inhabitants*,—no less than 682,795 sittings in churches and chapels having been provided within the present century, of which only 70,611 are in parliamentary churches.

3rd. That the provision for religious instruction *is far more abundant, in proportion to the population, now than it was at the beginning of the century.* The church and chapel accommodation has been increased 219 *per cent.*, whilst the population has increased only 127 *per cent.*

4th. That *Sunday schools* have been provided, and are supported and taught by the voluntary zeal of the inhabitants, in which *one in every $5\frac{2}{3}$ of the population* are enrolled on the books, which must include an immense proportion of all the children of the working classes.

5th. That $55\frac{2}{3}$ *per cent.* of the children in Sunday schools are *able* to read, and are *actually reading, the Holy Scriptures.*

6th. That *sixty-six thousand teachers* are gratuitously engaged in the benevolent and pious duty of Sunday-school instruction.

7th. That *one in every ten of the population* are taught in *day schools*, of whom only a small proportion are taught in dame and factory schools.

8th. That the proportions of the established church and other religious bodies, so far as the sittings in churches and chapels would indicate, are as follows—viz., established church, 377,104 sittings ; other religious denominations, 617,479 ; but probably the portion actually attending the

churches would be less than this in comparison with the other sects.

9th. That the proportion of Sunday scholars taught are as follows—viz., in the schools of the established church, 123,451 ; in the schools of all other denominations, 285,080.

This, it will be perceived, is a much more favourable showing, in regard to our manufacturing districts, than I had ventured, from my more limited means of knowledge, to put forth. It is to be remembered, that church and chapel room to the amount of 50 *per cent.* is sufficient, the Bishop of London himself being judge, for any population : and that with regard to school attendance, supposing the whole of the population from the age of seven to fourteen to be at school, which is the maximum according to the Prussian system, the proportion would only be as about one-sixth to the population. But I must entreat the reader who is interested in these inquiries—and what Englishman is there who ought not to feel interested in them?—not to be satisfied with the above summary, but to procure Mr. Baines' book, and to render himself familiar with all its details. The work is intitled, "The Social, Educational, and Religious State of the Manufacturing Districts," &c., and is comprised in less than a hundred pages.

THE END.

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